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Psychical Research and Man's Survival of Bodily Death.



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PSYCHICAL RESEARCH AND MAN'S SURVIVAL OF BODILY DEATH

I

Most of us, perhaps, have, in a general way, heard something of the Society for Psychical Research, but it is not probable that many have found time or have had the patience to study the ponderous and often dry-as-dust volumes of the Proceedings of the Society. I have undertaken to write this series of articles in order to give the general reader a rough idea of the results so far achieved by the Society in some spheres of its field of activity and the bearing of them on the momentous question of man's survival of bodily death. I shall begin with the simple cases of apparitions and telepathy and end with the complex and amazing phenomena of cross-correspondence. The facts to be cited will almost all be taken from the Proceedings of the Society. I shall endeavour

to state as impartially as possible the alternative theories put forward to account for the facts and conclude with some observations of my own on their interpretation and the metaphysical problems which they suggest.

The Society for Psychical Research was founded in 1882 by some eminent men of science and letters

“for the purpose of making an organised and systematic attempt to investigate the various sorts of debatable phenomena which are *prima facie* inexplicable on any generally recognised hypothesis.”

The Society undertook principally to investigate the following subjects :—

(1) An examination of any influence which may be exerted by one mind upon another apart from any generally recognised mode of perception.

(2) The study of hypnotism and mesmerism and an inquiry into the alleged phenomena of clairvoyance.

(3) A careful investigation of any reports, resting on testimony sufficiently strong and not too remote of apparitions coinciding with some external event (as for instance death) or giving information

previously unknown to the percipient, or being seen by two or more persons independently of each other.

(4) An inquiry into various alleged phenomena apparently inexplicable by known laws of nature, and commonly referred by spiritualists to the agency of extra-human intelligences.

(5) The collection and collation of existing materials bearing on the history of these subjects.

Stories of ghosts, haunted houses, apparitions and such other supernatural phenomena have been current since time immemorial. Their reality has been denied, they have been proclaimed as unworthy of credence of men with any pretension to culture and education, they have been persistently poohpoohed and jeered at, but, all the same, they display a tenacious vitality which is explicable only on the supposition that amidst much illusion and deception, there does exist a nucleus of something which demands explanation. As Professor Hyslop says,—

“Their constancy in the experience of all races in all stages of human culture has been so prominent a

fact that Mr. Herbert Spencer traces not only the belief in a future life to them, but also the origin of religion. He is also so much impressed with their influence upon ideas and institutions that he gives them an important place among the forces that determine the data of Sociology."

It is difficult to attribute beliefs so persistent and wide-spread entirely to superstition and illusion. At any rate, a scientific age can scarcely leave unexplored a *terra incognita* full, it may be, of mines of gold or of bogs and quicksand only.

Now, the Society for Psychical Research came into existence precisely with the object of settling once for all the question whether there is any substratum of truth in the supernormal phenomena so persistently alleged to occur and if so what is their explanation and significance. It is obvious that no subject of greater importance can engage the attention of man. If, to use the words of Hegel in another connection, "it is held a valuable achievement to have discovered sixty odd species of the parrot, a hundred and thirty seven of veronica and so forth, it should surely be held a far more valuable achievement to discover" whether man survives death

or not. The late Mr. Gladstone truly said,—“It”—the work of the Society for Psychical Research—“is the most important work which is being done in the world—by far the most important”. The Society for Psychical Research was, as I have already said, organised in 1882 with Professor Henry Sidgwick as the President. Other distinguished persons who, in later years, have been its Presidents are the Rt. Hon’ble A. J. Balfour, the late Prime-Minister of England, Sir William Crookes, Professor William James, Professor Balfour Stewart,¹ Frederic W. H. Myers, Sir Oliver Lodge, Professor W. F. Barrett, Professor Charles Richet, The Rt. Hon’ble Gerald Balfour and Mrs. Henry Sidgwick. Among its workers and members we find the names of such men as Professor S. P. Langley, Lord Rayleigh, the Bishop of Ripon, Dr. Milne Bramwell, Prof. James Hyslop, Prof. J. J. Thompson, F. R. S., Mr. Frank Podmore and scores of others with similar standing in the scientific world. The Society began its work with no partiality for the phenomena it undertook to investigate. On the contrary,

its bias was distinctly against them. The rules of method governing the Society, Professor William James aptly calls "draconian." Indeed the canon of evidence insisted upon by the Society is so exacting that Dr. Alfred Russel Wallace, who discovered the law of natural selection simultaneously with Darwin, and some others seceded from the Society years ago on the ground that "no experience based on mere eye-sight could ever have a chance to be admitted as true, if such an impossibly exacting standard of proof was exacted in every case". As a writer in a recent issue of the *Times* says,—

"The standard of evidence required by Psychical Researchers is about five times stricter than that required to hang a man for murder; and Mr. Podmore's standard is several degrees stricter than that."

It is for this reason that the Society for Psychical Research has become so obnoxious to men like Mr. W. T. Stead, who are of opinion that the Society is so absurdly sceptical that it is obstructing rather than promoting a knowledge of the true nature of super-normal phenomena. Readers, therefore, may rest assured that any

phenomenon accepted as true by the Society and recorded in its Proceedings is as unquestionable as the fact that the sun shines.

Among the subjects to which the attention of the Society was first directed is telepathy. This term was coined to indicate the super-normal acquisition by one person of some thought or feeling existing in the mind of another. The word generally used to express this fact is 'thought-transference.' But as it is not thought only that is transferred, and as the transference often takes place across a considerable distance of space, the term 'telepathy' was brought into use. Various experiments were performed and it was found that it is sometimes possible to impress upon persons susceptible of telepathic influence, whether in the hypnotic or in a normal condition, ideas and feelings similar to those of the agent or operator. What the peculiar conditions are on which the success of a telepathic operation depends is, of course, entirely unknown. Regarding these experiments, the Report on the census of hallucinations says,—

"The experiments may be divided into three classes.

(1) In the great majority of cases the experimenter was trying to make himself visible to the percipient, at or near the time at which the effect was produced on the latter. But (2) there are two cases in which the percipient saw an apparition of the experimenter when the latter was merely trying to make the percipient think of him : and these are noteworthy as having a closer resemblance than the first class to the ordinary non-experimental apparitions of living persons. (3) Finally we have an old but well-attested record of a unique case, in which the experimenter transferred to two percipients an apparition of a third person.—(*Proceedings S. P. R.*, Vol. X. P. 29).

But telepathic phenomena *experimentally produced* form only a small part of these phenomena investigated by the Society. The bulk of them are those which are produced spontaneously. What happens in these cases is that a hallucination or some unaccountable impression is produced in the mind of a person at a moment coinciding or nearly coinciding with the moment at which another at a distance, often across continents and oceans, dies or passes through a crisis. *A*, for example, dies in Australia ; just at that moment his apparition is seen by *B* in England, who knows nothing of what has happened to *A* except what is conveyed by the apparition itself.

A very large number of cases of this nature are on record. The apparition that is seen is not necessarily anything objective. The name of "veridical hallucination" has been given to it. "We speak," says the Report on the census of hallucinations, "of these phenomena as 'coincidental' or 'veridical' hallucinations."

The latter of the two terms has been sometimes criticised, on the ground that the meaning of the adjective is inconsistent with the received sense of the substantive; but it seems to us that the combination exactly expresses the mingling of truth and error in the apparent perception of objective fact which the phenomenon involves. We regard the phenomenon as a "hallucination" because it is an apparent perception of a body occupying a portion of space, under conditions which render it unreasonable to suppose that this portion of space was really so occupied: at the same time, we call it "veridical hallucination" because so far as it suggests that the person in question is dying or passing through some other crisis at the time, it represents a real fact otherwise unknown to the percipient.—(*Proceedings S. P. R., Vol. X, P. 30.*)

To determine whether a causal connection exists between deaths and apparitions a committee was appointed by the Society for Psychical Research in 1889 consisting

of Professor Sidgwick, Mrs. Sidgwick, Miss Alice Johnson, Frederic W. H. Myers and Mr. Frank Podmore, with Professor Sidgwick as President. Mr. Frank Podmore's name is now well known all over the world as a relentlessly hostile critic of spiritualism and of super-normal phenomena generally. Miss Alice Johnson is a distinguished mathematician, who stood above the sixth wrangler of her year. She is a prominent worker of the Society for Psychical Research. The others are distinguished persons well-known to every educated man. The Committee made an exhaustive inquiry into the spontaneous hallucinations of the sane, characterised by thoroughness and extreme caution, and presented a voluminous report which forms the bulk of the tenth volume of the S. P. R. Proceedings. It is impossible for me to give in this paper even a meagre description of the elaborate method of inquiry adopted by the Committee. The reader must go to the Report itself for that. The unanimous conclusion of the Committee was that the coincidence between deaths and apparitions of the dying was 440 times more numerous than chance would account for. Of course,

the calculation was made according to the well-known methods of the logic of chance. "Between deaths and apparitions of the dying persons," says the Report, "a connection exists which is not due to chance alone. This we hold as a proved fact. The discussion of its full implications cannot be attempted in this paper, nor perhaps exhausted in this age." The Report being unanimous, it, of course, bears the signature of Mr. Podmore. The same conclusion, I may add here, had previously been arrived at by Edmund Gurney by means of his own independent investigations.

I now give a few specimens of the kind of phenomena with which the Committee had to deal—

I.—From Mr. James Lloyd, 3, The Grove, Adderley Road, Birmingham, February 10th, 1891.

I was in India. I awoke in the night and saw my father in England, standing beside the bed. He was as real as in life, and dressed in a grey suit such as he used to wear when I last saw him about nine years before. The figure said, 'Good-bye Jim. I won't see you any more,' or words to that effect. A month after that (the first mail I could have heard by) a letter came, saying he had died the same night and about that hour—September 14th, 1876. I was

a soldier at Mhow in Bombay Presidency. What hour the vision appeared I did not know. In the morning I told a comrade who slept in the next room.

I wrote it on the wall at the back of my bed at the same time so as to fix the date.

Mr. Lloyd was 27 at the time, and was in good health, and in no anxiety about his father. (*Proceedings, S. P. R, Vol. X, P. 216*).

II.—From Mr. S. Walker-Anderson, Tickhill, near Bawtry, Yorks, June 12th, 1891.

An aunt of mine, who died in England last November, 1890, appeared before me in Australia, and I knew before I received the letter of her death that she was dead. I took a note of it at the time, and found on comparing notes that she appeared to me the day she died—date November 21st, 1890. (*Ibid, P. 212*).

III.—From the Rev. Matthew Frost, Bowers Gifford, Essex, January 30, 1891.

The first Thursday in April, 1881, while sitting at tea with my back to the window and talking with my wife in the usual way, I plainly heard a rap at the window, and looking round I said to my wife, 'why, there's my grandmother,' and went to the door, but could not see any one, and still feeling sure it was my grandmother, and knowing, though 83 years of age, she was very active and fond of a joke, I went round the house, but could not see any one. My wife did not hear it. On the following Saturday I had news my grandmother died in Yorkshire about half an hour before the time I heard the rapping. The

last time I saw her alive I promised, if well, I would attend her funeral ; that was some two years before. I was in good health and had no trouble ; age 26 years. I did not know that my grandmother was ill.

Mrs. Frost writes,—

“I beg to certify that I perfectly remember all the circumstances my husband has named but I heard and saw nothing myself.” (*Ibid*, P. 225.)

IV.—From Mrs. J. H.

March 29, 1892.

It occurred at Bury (Lancashire) about fourteen years ago ; I was awakened by a rattling noise at the window, and wakened my step-brother, with whom I was sleeping, and asked him if he could hear it. He told me to go to sleep, there was nothing. The rattle came again in a few minutes, and I sat up in bed, and distinctly saw the image of one of my step-brothers (who at the time was in Blackpool) pass from the window towards the door. Time—2-30 A. M.

I was in good health and spirits. Age 18.

I had not seen him for some time. He had not been home for 2 or 3 months. We heard next morning that he had been taken ill and died about 2-30 A. M. (*Ibid*, P. 230.)

V.—From Mr. H. Sims,

46, Geach Street, Birmingham, May 20, 1891.

Sixteen years ago, I had just got into bed, but had not lowered the gas, which was burning brightly. My wife and I both saw her aunt walk across the

room and disappear. The figure was as plain as in life. She lived one and a half miles away, and was ill at the time. Next day we heard she had died about that hour.

My age was 26.

Mrs. Sims adds a note to the narrative,—I certify the above to be correct. (*Ibid* P. 231.)

VI.—*From Mrs. B de A,*

Rio de Janeiro, March 14 1892.

I saw the form of a lady-friend lying on a sofa as if dead. I exclaimed, 'Retinha is lying there dead, mother'. We were living at the time at Rio de Janeiro. It was past midnight on the 21st June, 1886.

I was doing needle work. Health and spirits good. Age at time 56.

It was Donna R. N. my cousin. She had promised to dine with me that very day, but afterwards sent word that she would dine at T. She died of congestion of the brain at the house of the people she had gone to visit, shortly after midnight, and was laid out on the sofa. I saw her next day exactly in the same position in which I had seen her at home.

My mother and a servant was present. They did not share the experience. (*Ibid*, P. 233.)

Most of these phenomena can be adequately explained by telepathy from the *dying*. We may suppose that some sort of influence as yet unknown to science emanates from the mind of a person about

to die or passing through a crisis and somehow affects another, susceptible to the influence, at a distance. In what this susceptibility consists, it is impossible even to conjecture, but there does seem to exist some peculiar condition, which, obviously occurs very rarely, on which the reception of the influence depends. Telepathy between any two minds does not appear to be possible. To obviate the objection on the part of those who are not sufficiently in touch with these things that the dying person cannot be supposed to exert any sort of influence, it is necessary to say that we have got to reckon with the subliminal self of man. The telepathic influence may pass from some subconscious stratum of the mind quite unknown to the normal consciousness. It will be far beyond the scope of this paper to attempt to summarise the evidence for the theory that our ordinary self is only a fragment of a larger self. Nor can the task be easily accomplished. All that I can do is to baldly state the conclusion at which investigators like Frederic Myers, William James and others have arrived. What the nature of the

subliminal self is, has, of course, not been determined and cannot, in my view, be *experimentally* determined. It is a problem for speculative philosophy to attack with the aid of the materials supplied by scientific research. Now, it may very well be that the more potent telepathic agent is the subconscious mind and not the conscious mind and, if so, the fact that the dying person does not consciously send forth telepathic influence is no argument against his being the agent of the operation. Whether it is so or not must, of course, be decided by the nature of the facts. All that can be safely asserted at present is that the great majority of apparitions can be explained by telepathy from the dying. This does not mean that a spiritistic interpretation of them is not possible. It may be maintained that the person just dead or some other spirit in the other world telepathically conveys the news of death to a relative or friend on earth by means of the apparition. But in framing a hypothesis, it is not permissible to refer to agents not known to exist as long as a *vera causa* can be found capable of adequately explaining

it. The mere fact that an apparition is seen does not imply that it is caused by a deceased person. Numerous instances are on record of apparitions of living persons. The following is an example.

From Miss A. E. R.

When out in camp in an Indian Jungle, my sister and I were anxiously awaiting the return of her husband, who had left in the morning on a surveying expedition, promising to return early in the afternoon. Between six and seven p. m. we were very uneasy and were watching the line of road, I should say 200 yards distant from where we stood. Simultaneously we exclaimed, "There he is" and I distinctly saw him, sitting in his dog-cart driving his grey horse, the syce occupying the seat behind. We at once returned to the tents—my sister ordering the bearer to get the Sahib's bath-water ready, and the butler to prepare dinner, I running to set my brother-in-law's mother's mind at rest as to the safety of her son. However, as time passed on, and he did not appear, our alarm returned, and was not allayed until he arrived in safety at eight o'clock. On interrogating him we found he was just starting the surveying ground, about eight miles distant, at the very time we had the above-related experience. I should add, we were both in good health and certainly wide awake at the time, and I have never before or since had any experience of the kind. (*Proceedings, S. P. R. Vol. X, p. 308.*)

But all cases of apparitions are not simple like those I have cited above. Some of them are of persons not *dying*, but *dead* and give such indications of appearing with a purpose that it is by no means easy to explain them by telepathy from the living. The following experience of Lord Brougham, who was travelling with his friends in Sweden, is an example.—

We set out for Gothenberg determined to make Norway. About one in the morning, arriving at a decent inn we decided to stop for the night.

Tired with the cold of yesterday, I was glad to take advantage of a hot bath before I turned in, and here a most remarkable thing happened to me—so remarkable that I must tell the story from the beginning.

After I left the high school, I went with G. my first intimate friend, to attend the classes in the University. There was no divinity class, but we frequently in our walks discussed and speculated upon many grave subjects—among others on immortality of the soul and on a future state. This question, and the possibility, I will not say of ghosts walking, but of the dead appearing to the living, were subjects of much speculation ; and we actually committed the folly of drawing up an agreement, written with our own blood, to the effect that whichever of us died the first should appear to the other, and thus solve the doubts we had entertained of the life after death.

After we had finished our classes at the College, G, went to India, having got an appointment there in the Civil Service. He seldom wrote to me, and after the lapse of a few years I had almost forgotten him; moreover his family having little connection with Edinburgh I seldom saw or heard anything of them, so that all his school-boy intimacy had died out and I had nearly forgotten his existence. I had taken, as I have said a warm bath, and while lying in it and enjoying the comfort of the heat after the late freezing I had undergone, I turned my head around looking towards the chair on which I had deposited my clothes as I was about to get out of the bath. On the chair sat G., looking calmly at me. How I got out of the bath, I know not, but on recovering my senses I found myself sprawling on the floor. The apparition, or whatever it was that had taken the likeness of G. had disappeared. (Quoted in Hyslop's *Science and a Future Life*, pp. 47-48.)

The apparition occurred on December 19, 1799 and Lord Brougham made a record of it at the time. On his return to Edinburgh, he received a letter from India announcing the death of G. on the same day. The experience produced a profound impression on Lord Brougham's mind. The telepathic explanation of the event would, of course, be that the apparition was due to the influence of the dying G.'s mind on Lord Brougham. But what are

we to make of the compact to appear and solve the doubt about 'life after death'? It is certainly possible to say that it is only a chance coincidence. But every reader must judge for himself whether this solution of the problem satisfies his mind.

A remarkable case is the following:—

From Miss Dodson, September 14, 1891.

On June 5th, 1887, a Sunday evening between 11 and 12 at night, being awake my name was called three times. I answered twice, thinking it was my uncle, 'come in, uncle George, I am awake,' but the third time I recognised the voice as that of my mother, who had been dead 16 years. I said 'Mamma!' She then came round a screen near my bed-side with two children in her arms, and placed them in my arms and put the bed clothes over them and said, 'Lucy, promise me to take care of them, for their mother is just dead!' I said, 'Yes mamma!' She repeated '*promise* me to take care of them'. I replied, 'Yes, I promise you!' and I added 'oh, mamma, stay and speak to me, I am so wretched.' She replied, 'not yet, my child,' then she seemed to go round the screen again, and I remained, feeling the children to be still in my arms, and fell asleep. When I awoke there was nothing. Tuesday morning, June 7th, I received the news of my sister-in-law's death. She had given birth to a child three weeks before, which I did not know till after her death.

I was in bed but not asleep, and the room was lighted by a gaslight in the street outside. I was out of health and in anxiety about family troubles. My age was 42. I was quite alone. I mentioned the circumstance to my uncle the next morning. He thought I was sickening for brain fever. I had other experiences, but only to the extent of having felt a hand laid on my head, and some times on my hands, at times of great trouble. (*S. P. R. Proceedings, Vol. X. P. 380*)

This case was accepted after a personal inquiry by no less a person than Professor Sidgwick, renowned for his caution and scepticism and the real author of the draconian rules of method of the society. If no definite information had been given by the phantom it would have been possible to regard it as purely subjective and to attribute it to the percipient's ill health and her anxiety about family troubles. But a detailed and precise information was given which turned out to be correct. If we are not to attribute the apparition to the agency of Miss Dodson's departed mother, we shall have to say, in the words of the Report that "a telepathic impulse from the living brother might conceivably embody itself for the percipient in the form of their mother".

Another case as remarkable as the preceding is the one quoted in Myers's *Human Personality and its survival of bodily death* from S. P. R. Proceedings, Vol. VI, P. 16.

From Mr. F. G. of Boston, Jan. 11, 1888.

Replying to the recently published request of your Society for actual occurrences of Psychical phenomena, I respectfully submit the following remarkable occurrence to the consideration of your distinguished society, with the assurance that the event made a more powerful impression on my mind than the combined incidents of my whole life. I have never mentioned it outside of my family and a few intimate friends, knowing well that few would believe it, or else ascribe it to some disordered state of my mind at the time; but I well know that I never was in better health or possessed a clearer head and mind than at the time it occurred.

In 1867 my only sister, a young lady of eighteen years, died suddenly of cholera in St. Louis, Mo. My attachment for her was very strong, and the blow a severe one to me. A year or so after her death the writer became a commercial traveller, and it was in 1876, while in one of my western trips that the event occurred.

I had "drummed" the City of St. Joseph, Mo. and had gone to my room at the Pacific House to send in my orders, which were unusually large ones, so that I was in a very happy frame of mind indeed. My

thoughts, of course, were about these orders. I had not been thinking of my sister. The hour was high noon. While busily smoking a cigar and writing out my orders, I suddenly became conscious that some one was sitting on my left, with one arm resting on the table. Quick as a flash I turned and distinctly saw the form of my sister and for a brief second or so looked her squarely in the face, and so sure was I that it was she that I sprang forward in delight and the apparition vanished. * * * She appeared as if alive. Her eyes looked kindly and perfectly natural into mine.

Now comes the most remarkable *confirmation* of my story. This visitation so impressed me that I took the next train home and in the presence of my parents and others I related what had occurred. My father, a man of rare good sense and very practical, was inclined to ridicule me but he too was amazed when later on I told them of a bright red line or scratch on the right hand side of my sister's face, which I had distinctly seen. When I mentioned this my mother rose trembling to her feet and nearly fainted away, and as soon as she sufficiently recovered her self-possession, with tears streaming down her face, she exclaimed, I had indeed seen my sister, as no living mortal but herself was aware of that scratch which she had accidentally made while doing some little act of kindness after my sister's death. She said she remembered how pained she was to think that she should have, unintentionally, marred the features of her dead daughter and that, unknown to all, how she had carefully obliterated all traces of the slight scratch, with the aid of powder, &c.,

and that she had never mentioned it to a human being from that day to this. In proof neither my father nor any of our family had detected it, and positively were unaware of the incident, yet *I saw the scratch as bright as if just made*. So strangely impressed was my mother, that even after she had retired to rest she got up and dressed, came to me and told me *she knew* at least that I had seen my sister. A few weeks later, my mother died happy in her belief she would rejoin her favourite daughter in a better world.

I have left out a few unimportant sentences in this narrative to economise space. On this case Mr. Myers observes,—

“This coincidence is too marked to be explained away. The son is brought home in time to see his mother once more by perhaps the only means which would have succeeded and the mother herself is sustained by the knowledge that her daughter loves and awaits her. Mr. Podmore has suggested, on the other hand, that the daughter’s figure was a mere projection from the mother’s mind: a conception which has scarcely any analogy to support it.”

I shall conclude with a very startling Russian case.

From Baron Von Driesen.

“Baron Von Driesen begins by saying that he has never believed and does not believe in the supernatural; and that he is more inclined to attribute the apparition he saw to his ‘excited fancy’ than to any-

thing else. After these preliminary remarks he proceeds as follows,—

“I must tell you that my father-in-law M. N. J. Ponomareff died in the country. This did not happen at once, but after a long and painful illness, whose sharp phases had obliged my wife and myself to join him long before his death. I had not been on good terms with M. Ponomareff. Different circumstances which are out of place in this narrative had estranged us from each other, and these relations did not change until his death. He died very quietly, after having given his blessing to all his family, including myself. A liturgy for the rest of his soul was to be celebrated on the ninth day. I remember very well how I went to bed between one and two o'clock on the eve of that day and how I read the Gospel before falling asleep. My wife was sleeping in the same room. It was perfectly quiet. I had just put out the candle when footsteps were heard in the adjacent room—a sound of slippers shuffling, I might say—which ceased before the door of our bedroom. I called out ‘who is there?’ No answer. I struck one match, then another, and when after the stifling smell of the sulphur the fire had lighted up the room, I saw M. Ponomareff standing before the closed door. Yes, it was he, in his blue dressing-gown, lined with squirrel furs and only half-buttoned, so that I could see his white waist-coat and his black trousers. It was he undoubtedly. I was not frightened. They say that, as a rule, one is *not* frightened when seeing a ghost, as ghosts possess the quality of paralysing fear.

"What do you want?" I asked my father-in-law. M. Ponomareff made two steps forward, stopped before my bed, and said, 'Basil Feodorovitch, I have acted wrongly towards you. Forgive me! Without this I do not feel at rest there.' He was pointing to the ceiling with his left hand whilst holding out his right to me. I seized this hand, which was long and cold, shook it and answered, 'Nicholas Ivanovitch, God is my witness that I have never had anything against you.'

The ghost of my father-in-law bowed, moved away and went through the opposite door into the billiard room, where he disappeared. I looked after him for a moment, crossed myself, put out the candle, and fell asleep with the sense of joy which a man who has done his duty must feel. The morning came. My wife's brothers, as well as our neighbours and the peasants, assembled, and the liturgy was celebrated by our confessor, the Rev. Father Basil. But when all was over the same Father Basil led me aside and said to me mysteriously, 'Basil Feodorovitch, I have got something to say to you in private'. My wife having come near us at this moment, the clergyman repeated his wish. I answered, "Father Basil, I have no secret from my wife, please tell us what you wished to tell me alone."

Then Father Basil who is living till now (1890) in the Koi Parish of the district of Kashin said to me in a rather solemn voice, 'This night at three o'clock Nicholas Ivanovitch Ponomareff appeared to

me and begged of me to reconcile him to you'*
(*S. P. R. Proceedings, Vol. X, Pp. 385-86*).

Father Basil corroborates this narrative. His account, which will be found in the *S. P. R. Proceedings*, need not be quoted here.

The telepathic explanation of this phenomenon would perhaps be that the apparition seen by Baron Von Driesen was a pure hallucination caused somehow by his subconscious regret 'for his misunderstanding with his deceased father-in-law and that seen by Father Basil was due to telepathic influence from the Baron's mind. Once more the reader must decide for himself whether this explanation is satisfactory to him. It will be observed that in this case and in that of Miss Dodson, the apparitions were, seemingly, not mere hallucinations. Dr. A. R. Wallace and many others and the spirits themselves, if spirits they be, say that

"Under certain conditions the disembodied spirit is

* Do not cases like this enable us to understand the truth about Christ's resurrection after his crucifixion and his appearance to St. Paul on the Damascus Road?

able to form for itself a visible body out of the emanation from living bodies in a proper magnetic relation to itself, and, under certain still more favourable conditions, this body can be made tangible."

It may be so, but, as yet, there does not seem to be sufficient evidence to justify this assertion. One must not, however, ignore Sir William Crookes's experiences, notably those connected with "Katie King".

The very cautious conclusion of the Sidgwick Committee on the apparitions of the dead is as follows,—

"We have found that the distribution of recognised apparitions before, at and after the death of the person seen affords some argument for the continuity of Psychical life and the possibility of communication from the dead. We have found further that the Census affords some remarkable cases which *prima facie* are not purely subjective, and which suggest the action of the dead. The amount of evidence, however, does not appear to us in itself sufficient to constitute anything like a conclusive case for *post mortem* agency."

This, however, was only a conclusion to which all the members of the Committee were able to agree. The individual opinions of them were naturally divergent. Mr. Myers was in favour of spiritistic agency,

at any rate in some cases, Mr. Podmore decidedly hostile to it, while professor and Mrs. Sidgwick were not inclined to commit themselves to any definite opinion.

I have talked freely about telepathy in this paper. But, it may legitimately be asked, whether there is any warrant for assuming that it is a proved fact. The answer is that unless we assume that there is some supernormal means of communication between mind and mind, to which the name of telepathy has been given, it is impossible to account for the connection between deaths and apparitions which, according to the Sidgwick Committee, is not due to chance alone. Even if we conclude that some at least of the apparitions are caused by spirits, a means of communication is necessary. What is the process by which departed souls manage sometimes to convey messages to their friends and relatives on earth? Obviously, it is telepathy. If you accept the facts recorded in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research, you have no alternative but to admit the reality of telepathy for the explanation of them. The facts are beyond

cavil. They have, it must be remembered, found place in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research because they have conformed not only to the standard of evidence of the Society which is "five times stricter than that required to hang a man for murder," but also to that of Mr. Podmore which is "several degrees stricter than that." The only issue, therefore, is whether for the explanation of the facts it is necessary to go beyond telepathy from the living. That most of the facts can thus be accounted for is undeniable, though, of course, they can also be explained on the hypothesis of spirit agency. There remain, however, a small number of cases, such as those of the commercial traveller and the Russian Baron, which it is difficult to see how telepathy from the living can explain.

What is telepathy and what is its law? Is it a physical or a psychical process? It is impossible to answer these questions in the present state of our knowledge. There are various speculations on the subject, but no definite and generally accepted conclusion. Indeed, orthodox science has not yet accepted it even as a fact to be explained.

All that we can do, therefore, is to note the theories provisionally put forward by eminent scientists and philosophers who have studied the subject and speculate ourselves. Mr. Myers, whose views are entitled to the greatest respect, regarded telepathy as the fundamental and all-pervasive law of both the physical and the spiritual world. "Love," he tells us, "is a kind of exalted but unspecialised telepathy; the simplest and most universal expression of that mutual gravitation or kinship of spirits which is the foundation of the telepathic law." In his famous Presidential address to the Society for Psychical Research he said,—

"To believe that prayer is heard is to believe in telepathy—in the direct influence of mind on mind. To believe that prayer is answered is to believe that unembodied spirit does actually modify (even if not storm cloud or plague germ) at least the minds, and therefore the brains, of living men."

Mr. Arthur Balfour, in his Presidential address, dwells upon the dissimilarity between telepathic action and the action of any known physical force. His distinguished brother, Mr. Gerald Balfour, regards

telepathy "as the universal form of interaction between Psychological existences, and even, it may be, the fundamental bond of unity and principle of development within the entire spiritual world." "Is it too wild a flight of speculative fancy to imagine," he asks, "that telepathy, in its highest aspect, is an actively unifying principle leading us upwards and onwards, the manifestation in the world of spirits of the supreme unity of the Divine mind."—(*Proceedings, S. P. R.*, Vol. XIX, Pp. 388-89). Sir William Crookes, on the other hand, believes that there must be a physical medium of communication of the telepathic influence from one mind to another. "If", he says in his Presidential address to the British Association, "telepathy takes place, we have two physical facts—the physical change in the brain of *A* the suggester and the analogous physical change in the brain of *B*, the recipient of the suggestion. Between these two physical events, there must exist a train of physical causes." Professor Flournoy of Geneva takes the same view. "How could one believe", he observes, "that centres of chemical phenomena so complex as the nervous

centres could find themselves in activity without transmitting various undulations, - X, Y, or Z rays,—passing through the skull as the sun passes through glass and going on to act, at any distance, on their homologues in other skulls? It is a mere question of intensity.

“If telepathy is considered strange, mystic, occult, supernormal, etc., it is because this character has been gratuitously conferred on it by making of this imponderable link between organisms a purely spiritual communication of soul to soul, independent of matter and of space. That such a metaphysical union does exist I am ready to believe, but it is to introduce a gratuitous confusion if one substitutes this problem of high speculation,—which abandons the strictly scientific ground and sets aside the principle of psycho-physical parallelism,—for the empirical problem of telepathy, which is perfectly concordant with that parallelism and in no way contradicts established science.”

Future investigations will, I believe, lend support to Professor Flournoy's views. It is not justifiable to use the term “telepathy” to signify the universal bond of union between spirits, as Mr. Myers and Mr. Gerald Balfour do. The close and essential union of all spirits in the universe is, no doubt, the presupposition of telepathy as of the ordinary means of communication

between finite minds, but it is inappropriate to call it telepathy. Restricting the term to mean some supernormal mode of communication between finite minds, it is impossible to regard it as a purely spiritual process.* No process is purely physical or purely psychical. Every thing physical has a psychical aspect, and every thing psychical has a physical aspect. All means of communication, therefore, between finite minds must be psycho-physical. So are speaking and writing and so must be telepathy. Professor Fournoy rightly says that if "telepathy is considered strange, mystic, occult, supernormal, etc., it is because this character has been gratuitously conferred on it." Those who build hopes

* If I am asked, how spirit communication can take place, if telepathy is not a purely psychical process, I answer by asking a question: Is it an axiomatic truth that departed spirits are bodiless and the spiritual world is really what its usual designation suggests? May not spirits possess bodies composed of some form of subtle matter and live in a world which is physical as much as spiritual though uncognisable by our present organs of sense? To my mind, a purely spiritual world and a purely physical world are inconceivable absurdities. I shall deal with the subject later on.

of immortality on the proof of telepathy are, I think, foredoomed to disappointment. Miss Alice Johnson, in her review of Podmore's *Modern Spiritualism*, "is inclined to think that along this line our best chance lies of proving personal immortality." I venture to differ from her. If materialism is compatible with human intelligence and the ordinary modes of communication between mind and mind, which, be it remembered, are psychical no less than physical, why should it not be compatible with telepathy? Telepathy only shows that the human mind possesses a peculiar power hitherto undreamt of, but if mind itself fails to disprove materialism and justify the hope of immortality, the possession of one more power by it, however strange and however extensive, will certainly not do so. The only thing that will demonstrate man's survival of bodily death is spirit communication. This is pointedly indicated by some cases of apparitions and is, as we shall see, all but proved by the phenomena of automatic writing investigated by the Society for Psychical Research.

II

One of the objects of the Society for Psychical Research, it will be remembered, is to "inquire into various alleged phenomena apparently inexplicable by known laws of nature and commonly referred by spiritualists to the agency of extra-human intelligences". The society was singularly fortunate in finding a thoroughly honest and trustworthy medium whose trance phenomena have been under the close observation of men like Sir Oliver Lodge, Mr. Myers, Mr. Walter Leaf, Dr. Richard Hodgson and others for upwards of a quarter of a century. She is the renowned Mrs. Piper. The discovery of her is due to Professor William James. Hearing about Mrs. Piper from a friend, Prof. James's mother-in-law, Mrs. Gibbens, asked for a sitting out of curiosity, as she had never before seen a medium. Mrs. Gibbens was sceptical when she went to Mrs. Piper, but came back greatly impressed, as the spirit purporting to communicate through Mrs. Piper gave her private details unknown to persons not belonging to her family. This spirit, real or feigning, called itself

"Phinuit". On the day following Mrs. Gibben's visit to Mrs. Piper, Professor James's sister-in-law went to see her and obtained even more surprising results. For example, Phinuit gave entirely correct details about the writer of a letter in Italian, by placing the letter on the medium's forehead and deciphering its contents. Mrs. Piper is quite ignorant of that language. The Italian who had written that letter was not known to more than two persons in the whole United States. Professor James, however, was amused by the statements of his relatives and laughed at their credulity. Nevertheless, his curiosity was awakened and a few days after, he and his wife asked Mrs. Piper for a sitting, taking, of course, all possible precautions against their identity being known. Intimate details about Professor James's family which could not by any means be normally known to Mrs. Piper were given.* The impression pro-

* It is necessary to state here that when a sitting takes place, Mrs. Piper falls into a deep trance and becomes quite unconscious. The genuineness of the trance has been testified to by competent medical and other observers. At the time when Prof. James saw

duced on Prof. James's mind after this first sitting was that unless Mrs. Piper knew his own and his wife's families very intimately, of which, however, there was not the slightest chance, she must be possessed of supernormal powers. In the course of the winter, he had twelve more sittings with Mrs. Piper and the result was that his scepticism was thoroughly shaken. The following are examples of the kind of information which Phinuit gave.

Professor James's mother-in-law had, on her return from Europe, lost her bank-note. At a sitting held soon afterwards, Phinuit was asked whether he could give any information about it. He told her exactly where it was and there it was found.

At another sitting Phinuit told Professor her and for some time after, during a trance, the voice of the unconscious Mrs. Piper was controlled by Phinuit and communications were made verbally. Later on, when George Pelham became the communicator, the messages were conveyed by means of automatic writing. Sometimes the voice and the right hand were controlled by two different "spirits" and different communications quite unrelated to each other were simultaneously made.

James, who was not accompanied by Mrs. James, "your child has a boy named Robert F. as a play-fellow in our world." The F's were cousins of Mrs. James who lived in a distant town. On returning home, Prof. James said to his wife, "your cousins the F's have lost a child, haven't they? But Phinuit made a mistake about the sex; he said it was a boy." Mrs. James confirmed the exactness of Phinuit's information; her husband had been wrong.

Thus learning that there are more things in heaven and earth than are dreamt of in the philosophy taught at Harvard, Professor James was naturally led to consider the question whether the orthodox belief that there can be nothing in any one's knowledge that has not come in through ordinary experiences of sense is tenable. "It is a miserable thing," he says, "for a question of truth to be confined to mere presumption and counter-presumption, with no decisive thunderbolt of fact to clear the baffling darkness.... For me the thunderbolt *has* fallen, and the orthodox belief has not merely had its presumption weakened, but the truth itself of the belief decisively over-

thrown. If I may employ the language of the professional logic-shop, a universal proposition can be made untrue by a particular instance. If you wish to upset the law that all crows are black, you must not seek to show that no crows are; it is enough if you prove one single crow to be white. My own white crow is Mrs. Piper. In the trances of this medium, I can not resist the conviction that knowledge appears which she has never gained by the ordinary waking use of her eyes, ears and wits. What the source of this knowledge may be I know not, and have not the glimmer of an explanatory suggestion to make, but from admitting the fact of such knowledge I can see no escape" (*The Will to Believe and Other Essays*, pp. 318-19).

On the recommendation of Professor James, the Society for Psychical Research took up the investigation of the trance phenomena of Mrs. Piper in 1885 and the investigation still continues. The person to whom this great and responsible task was entrusted was Dr. Richard Hodgson, LL.D. "Dr. Hodgson", says Prof. James, "is distinguished by a balance of mind

almost as rare as Sidgwick's". When he began these investigations, he was a pronounced agnostic and a thorough disbeliever in supernormal phenomena. He did not think that a future life was probable. He possessed intimate knowledge of the conjuring tricks often employed by fraudulent mediums to deceive their dupes and was thus able to unmask many a pseudo-medium. He it was who detected the tricks of Eusapia Palladino at the series of Cambridge sittings and it was again he who exposed Madame Blavatsky. He went to America in 1885 to study the trance phenomena of Mrs. Piper and lived there almost continuously for twenty years until his death in 1905, devoting himself entirely to this work. The infinite patience and perseverance with which he carried on the great work likely to result in discoveries of far-reaching consequence, quite unmindful of other interests and attractions and at great personal sacrifice, is beyond all praise. No noble achievement is possible without such single-minded devotion. Dr. Hodgson, of course, took all possible precautions against

fraud on the part of Mr. and Mrs. Piper. I have no space to describe the elaborate and stringent measures adopted to guard against possible fraud. The reader will find them set forth in minute detail in the several reports on the Piper case in the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. Suffice it to say, that during a quarter of a century of close observation, the thorough honesty of Mrs. Piper has been unchallengably established and no adverse critic of her trance phenomena, not even Mr. Podmore, seriously entertains the hypothesis of fraud. After Dr. Hodgson had observed Mrs. Piper for sometime in America, she was taken to England to make assurance doubly sure that informations were not acquired by her by ordinary means. Fraud was impossible in a country where Mrs. Piper was a total stranger and was out of her habitual environment. All the precautions taken in America were taken in England also. In England she came under the observation of Sir Oliver (then Mr.) Lodge, Frederic Myers and Mr. Walter Leaf. All were convinced that supernormal knowledge is displayed during her

trance but it was not thought necessary to have recourse to the hypothesis of spirit communication to account for it. Telepathy and possibly clairvoyance could, it was felt, explain most of the phenomena. Sir Oliver Lodge and Mr. Myers, however, admitted that some of the trance communications strongly suggested the agency of spirits.

As samples of the phenomena that occurred during this period, I quote the following from Sir Oliver Lodge's account of them.

"One of the best sitters was a friend who for several years was my next door neighbour at Liverpool, Isaac C. Thompson, F.L. S., to whose name indeed, before he had been in any way introduced, Phinuit sent a message purporting to come from his father. Three generations of his and of his wife's family living and dead (small and compact Quaker families,) were in the course of two or three sittings conspicuously mentioned with identifying detail, the main informant representing himself as his deceased brother, a young Edinburgh doctor, whose loss had been mourned some twenty years ago. The familiarity and touchingness of the messages communicated in this particular instance were very remarkable, and can by no means be reproduced in any printed report of the sitting. This case is one in which very few mistakes were made, the

details standing out vividly correct, so that in fact they found it impossible not to believe that their relations were actually speaking to them."

"There was a remarkable little incident towards the end of my series of sittings, when this friend of mine was present. A message interpolated itself to a gentleman living in Liverpool, known but not at all intimately known, to both of us, and certainly outside of our thoughts—the head of the Liverpool Post Office, Mr. Rich. The message purported to be from a son of his who had died suddenly a few months ago, and whom I had never seen ; though Isaac Thompson had, it seems, once or twice spoken to him. This son addressed I. C. Thompson by name and besought him to convey a message to his father, who, he said, was much stricken by the blow, and who was suffering from a recent occasional dizziness in his head, so that he felt afraid he should have to retire from business. Other little things were mentioned of an identifying character ; and the message was a few days later duly conveyed. The facts stated were admitted to be correct ; and the father though naturally inclined to be sceptical confessed that he had indeed been more than ordinarily troubled at the sudden death of his eldest son because of a recent unfortunate estrangement between them which would otherwise have been only temporary."

The following is an example of Phinuit's knowledge of events occurring elsewhere contemporaneously with a sitting :—

"On the 29th November Professor Henry Sidgwick,

of Cambridge, had a sitting with Mrs. Piper. It was arranged that Mrs. Sidgwick, who stayed at home, should do something specially marked during the sitting. Mrs. Piper was to be asked to describe it to prove her power of seeing at a distance. Phinuit, when questioned, replied, 'she is sitting in a large chair, she is talking to another lady, and she is wearing something on her head.' These details were perfectly correct. Mrs. Sidgwick was sitting in a large chair, talking to Miss Alice Johnson, and she had a blue handkerchief on her head. However Phinuit was wrong in his description of the room in which this happened."

This reminds one of the remarkable case of Swedenborg's mediumship which received the attention of the great philosopher Kant and is thus described by him :—

"Madame Herte Ville, the widow of the Dutch Ambassador in Stockholm, sometime after the death of her husband, was called upon by Croon, a goldsmith, to pay for a silver service which her husband had purchased from him. The widow was convinced that her late husband had been much too precise and orderly not to have paid his debt, yet she was unable to find the receipt. In her sorrow, and because the amount was considerable, she requested Mr. Swedenborg to call at her house. After apologising to him for troubling him, she said that if, as all people say, he possessed the extraordinary gift of conversing with the souls of the departed, he would perhaps

have the kindness to ask her husband how it was about the silver service. Swedenborg did not at all object to comply with her request. Three days afterwards the said lady had company at her house for coffee. Swedenborg called, and in his cool way informed her that he had conversed with her husband. The debt had been paid several months before his decease, and the receipt was in a bureau in the room upstairs. The lady replied that the bureau had been quite cleared out, and that the receipt was not found among all the papers. Swedenborg said that her husband had described to him, how after pulling out the left hand drawer a board would appear, which required to be drawn out, when a secret compartment would be disclosed, containing his private Dutch correspondence, as well as the receipt. Upon hearing this description the whole company arose and accompanied the lady into the room upstairs. The bureau was opened, they did as they were directed, the compartment was found, of which no one had ever known before, and to the great astonishment of all, the papers were discovered there, in accordance with his description.' (Quoted in Sir Oliver Lodge's *Survival of Man*, Pp. 119-20)"

As an illustration of a conversation, during this period, between the sitters and the spirits purporting to communicate, I quote the following:—

The sitters are Professor Oliver Lodge and his brother Alfred Lodge. The words

within brackets are remarks made by Prof. Lodge after the sitting.

"Phinuit "How are you Alfred? I have your mothers influence strong (pause). By George! that's Aunt Anne's ring (feeling ring I had put on my hand just before sitting) given over to you. And Olly dear* that's one of the last things I ever gave you. It was one of the last things I said to you in the body when I gave it you for Mary. 'I said for her through you.' (This is precisely accurate.) O. L. (Oliver Lodge) yes, I remember perfectly.

Phinuit speaking for Aunt Annie—I tell you I know it, I shall never forget. Keep it in memory of me, for I am not dead. Each spirit is not so dim (?) that it cannot recollect its belongings in the body. They attract us if there has been anything special about them. I tell you my boy I can see it just as plain as if I were in the body. (Further conversation and advice ending, convince yourself [of a future life] and let others do the same. There's a gentleman wants to speak to you) Mr. E. (an intimate deceased friend of Prof. Lodge, who had appeared before and offered proofs of identity which were verified later) Lodge, how are you? I tell you I am living, not dead. That's me. You know me, don't you?

O. L. Yes, delighted to see you again.

Mr. E. Don't give it up, Lodge. Cling to it. It's the best thing you have...

O. L. Is it bad for the medium?

* Here Phinuit is supposed to be reporting Aunt Anne's words in the first person.

E. It's the only way, Lodge. In one sense, it is bad, but in another it's good. It's her work. If I take possession of the medium's body, and she goes out, then I can use her organism to tell the world important truths. There is an infinite power above us. Lodge, believe it fully. Infinite over all, most marvellous. One can tell a medium, she is like a ball of light. You look as dark and material as possible, but we find two or three lights shining. It's like a series of rooms with candles at one end. Must use analogy to express it. When you need a light you use it, when you finish you put it out. They are like transparent windows to see through. Lodge, it's a puzzle. It is a puzzle to us here in a way, though we understand it better than you. I don't care for material things now, our interest is much greater. Lodge, keep up your courage, there's a quantity to hope for yet. Hold it up for a time. Don't be in a hurry. Get facts, no matter what they call you, go on investigating. Test to the fullest. Assure yourself, then publish. It will be all right in the end—no question about it. It's true".

Are these ostensible communications from departed spirits really so? Before this hypothesis can be seriously entertained, the following conditions must be strictly fulfilled. The communicator must prove his identity by unambiguously mentioning definite facts and incidents intimately con-

nected with his earthly life, unknown to the medium and incapable of being surmised by her. It is much better if the facts be unknown even to the sitter. But it must be known to some living person or persons, otherwise it would not be capable of verification. An elevating discourse or a glowing account of the life after death would be useless because unverifiable. Now, in numerous cases those conditions were abundantly fulfilled and yet the workers of the Society did not, at this time, feel themselves justified in attributing the phenomena to spirit agency. Why? Because telepathy bars the way. It must be remembered that spirit communication is the thing to be proved and it cannot be regarded even as a working hypothesis until alternative explanations of the facts break down. During the Phinuit regime, the telepathic theory, though at times the strain on it was very severe, had not broken down. Whether in view of later phenomena, it is still tenable, we shall see by-and-by. The telepathic theory is that during the trance of Mrs. Piper, her secondary personality comes to the fore and personates the dead. The

incidents of the earthly life of a personated individual, which must be communicated in order to prove identity, it telepathically gathers from the minds of persons to whom they are known. If they are known to the sitter, so much the better, for, in that case, they are easily accessible. If they are unknown to the sitter they must, in order to be verifiable, be known to living persons and from their minds the medium's telepathic faculty draws them. The medium, let us suppose, is at Boston. Her secondary personality succeeds in effectually deceiving a sitter by making him believe that he has received a communication from a deceased friend or relative by dramatically personating the deceased and collecting the necessary facts for the purpose from the minds of persons at a distance, say at Chicago, Philadelphia, Australia or England, if these facts are unknown to the sitter, as is very often the case. The hypothesis is unquestionably startling and in point of incredibility can fairly be compared with the tales of the Arabian Nights. But, after all, it may be true! Why the secondary personality should invariably be so diabolical and so

morbidly anxious to prove the existence of a future life, I have nowhere found explained. However that may be, in the days of Phinuit, none of the leading members of the Society for Psychical Research thought that they could legitimately back the hypothesis of spirit communication. And it must be admitted that there was ample justification for this attitude. Phinuit himself was perhaps the chief obstacle to the acceptance of the spiritistic hypothesis. He professed to be a spirit controlling Mrs. Piper's organism during her trance. Other spirits communicated through him. They, it was alleged, conveyed their messages to him and he communicated them to the sitters. The proof of the identity of a communicator was often given, but Phinuit utterly failed to prove his own identity. On the whole, he undoubtedly seems to be more like a secondary personality of Mrs. Piper than a spirit.

In his first report on Mrs. Piper, Dr. Hodgson did not think it necessary to go beyond the hypothesis of telepathy from the living, though he frankly admitted that

there were many facts which strongly made for the spiritistic hypothesis.

Matters stood thus when a remarkable development took place. Early in 1892, a young man to whom the pseudonym* of George Pelham has been given, died at New York in consequence of a fall. His age was 32. "He," says Dr. Hodgson, "was a lawyer by training, but had devoted himself chiefly to literature and philosophy, and had published two books which received the highest praise from competent authorities. He had resided for many years in Boston or its vicinity, but for three years preceding his death had been living in New York in bachelor apartments. He was an associate of our Society, his interest in which was explicable rather by an intellectual openness and fearlessness characteristic of him than by any tendency to believe in super-normal phenomena. He was in a sense well known to me personally, but chiefly on his intellectual side, the bond between us was not that of an old, intimate

* The reason for pseudonyms being given is the unwillingness of the persons concerned or their relatives to become objects of public curiosity.

and if I may so speak, emotional friendship. We had several long talks together on philosophic subjects, and one very long discussion, probably at least two years before his death, on the possibility of a "future life". In this he maintained that in accordance with a fundamental philosophic theory which we both accepted, a future life was not only incredible, but inconceivable, and I maintained that it was at least conceivable. At the conclusion of the discussion he admitted that a future life was conceivable, but he did not accept its credibility, and vowed that if he should die before I did, and found himself 'still existing,' he would 'make things lively' in the effort to reveal the fact of his continued existence." George Pelham had only on one occasion a sitting with Mrs. Piper, when, as usual, he was introduced under a false name. The result of the sitting did not impress him much.

On March 22, 1892, about 4 or 5 weeks after Pelham's death, one of his friends, Mr. John Hart (a pseudonym), had a sitting with Mrs. Piper. He took with him some articles belonging to G. P. G. P., whose first

manifestation took place at this meeting, at once recognised Hart and greeted him appropriately. On this occasion, he communicated not directly but through Phinuit, who acted as intermediary. George Pelham's real name was given in full and the Christian names and surnames of many of his most intimate friends, including Hart's. Incidents connected with these friends, unknown to the sitter, Mr. Hart or to Dr. Hodgson, were alluded to and subsequently verified. Hart gave a pair of studs to the medium and asked "who gave them to me?"* "That's mine, I gave you that part of it. I sent that to you. (When?) Before I came here. That's mine. Mother gave you that? (No). Well father then, father and mother together. You got these after I passed out. Mother took them. Gave them to father, and father gave them to you. I want you to keep them." Mr. Hart notes: "The studs were sent to me by Mr. Pelham as a remembrance of his son. I knew at the time that they had been

* The words within brackets in this extract and in others to follow are remarks made or questions asked by the sitter.

taken from G.'s body, and afterwards ascertained that his step-mother had taken them from the body and suggested that they would do to send to me, I having previously written to ask that some little memento be sent to me." Dr. Hodgson remarks that a good deal of the personal references made cannot be quoted because of their privacy. These were regarded by Hart as profoundly characteristic of Pelham. Pelham's intimate friends James and Mary (Mr. and Mrs.) Howard were mentioned with strongly personal specific references, and in connection with Mrs. Howard the name Katharine was mentioned. "Tell her, she'll know. I will solve the problems, Katharine." Mr. Hart notes, "This had no special significance for me at the time, though I was aware that Katharine, the daughter of Jim Howard, was known to George, who used to live with the Howards. On the day following the sitting I gave Mr. Howard a detailed account of the sitting. These words "I will solve the problems, Katharine" impressed him more than anything else, and at the close of my account he related that George, when

he had last stayed with them, had talked frequently with Katharine (a girl of fifteen years of age) upon such subjects as time, space, God, eternity and pointed out to her how unsatisfactory the commonly accepted solutions were. He added that sometime he would solve the problems, using almost the very words of the communication made at the sitting." All this was absolutely unknown to Hart or to Dr. Hodgson, who at that time had no acquaintance with the Howards.

Before Mr. and Mrs. Howard had an opportunity of having a sitting,—sittings were held by others for whom previous appointments had been made. At each of these sittings, Phinuit represented Pelham as anxious to see his freinds. Only one of the sitters during this period, Mr. Vance, happened to be known to Pelham. At the sitting at which he was present, Pelham expressed a wish to Dr. Hodgson to see his father and made references to two of his friends. Then for the first time he noticed Mr. Vance and dramatically asked, "How is your son? I want to see him some time." "Where did you know my son," inquired Mr. Vance. "In

studies, in College," was the reply, which was correct. Mr. Vance had a son who was G. P's class fellow. "Where did you stay with us," asked Vance. In reply he got a correct description of his country house.

The following extract will give the reader some idea of the sort of conversation that often took place between Dr. Hodgson and George Pelham. The words within round brackets are Dr. Hodgson's.

"I am determined to transfer to you my thoughts, although it will have to be done in this uncanny way. (Never mind. That's all right. We understand.) Good. I will move heaven and earth to explain these matters to you, Hodgson. You see I am not asleep. I am wide awake, and I assure you, I am ever ready to help you and to give you things of importance in this work. It was like Greek to me before I came here. I could not believe this existence. I am delighted to have this opportunity of coming here to this life, so as to be able to prove my experiences and existence here. Dear old Hodgson, I wish I could have known you better in your life, but I understand you now, and the philosophy of my being taken out. (Didn't you go too soon?) Not too soon, but it is my vocation to be able to explain these things to you and the rest of my friends (Does it do you harm?) And it is all nonsense about its doing me harm, for it surely does no harm and will help to enlighten the world. What think you Hodgson? (I agree entirely. I think it's the most

important work in the world). Oh! I am so glad your exalted brains are not too pretentious to accept the real truth and philosophy of my coming and explaining to you these important things. (Now, George, we mustn't keep the medium in trance too long.) Do not worry about her, she is having a good time, and I will do no harm, you know that too well. [Phinuit speaks] He says he is not an idiot (oh, I know he is not an idiot.)

I understand. You see I hear you. Now I will proceed with my important conversation. Your material universe is very exacting and it requires great practice and perseverance to do all I want to say to you" (*S. P. K. Proceedings, Vol. XIII, p. 314*).

G. P's intimate friends Mr. and Mrs. Howard had their first sitting on April 11th, 1892. At the beginning Phinuit spoke a few words and then gave way to George Pelham who controlled the voice of the entranced Mrs. Piper during the rest of the sitting. Very personal and intimate statements, all correct, were made by G. P. Inquiries were made about common friends, and the Howards, says Dr. Hodgson, "who were not predisposed to take any interest in Psychical Research, but who had been induced by the account of Mr. Hart to have a sitting with Mrs. Piper, were profoundly impressed with the feeling that they were

in truth holding a conversation with the personality of the friend whom they had known so many years." The following extract gives an account of part of the conversations:—

G. P. Jim is that you? Speak to me quick. I am not dead. Don't think me dead. I am awfully glad to see you. Can't you see me? Don't you hear me? Give my love to my father and tell him I want to see him. I am happy here, and more so since I find I can communicate with you. I pity those people who can't speak. I want you to know I think of you still. I spoke to John about some letters. I left things terribly mixed, my books and my papers. You will forgive me for this, won't you?

(What do you do George, where you are?)

I am scarcely able to do anything yet. I am just awakened to the reality of life after death. It was like darkness, I could not distinguish anything at first. Darkest hours just before dawn, you know that, Jim. I was puzzled, confused. Shall have an occupation soon. Now I can see you my friends. I can hear you speak. Your voice, Jim, I can distinguish with your accent and articulation, but it sounds like a big bass drum. Mine would sound to you like the faintest whisper.

(Our conversation then is something like telephoning).
Yes.

(By long distance telephone).

[G. P. laughs.]

(Were you not surprised to find yourself living ?)

Perfectly so. Greatly surprised. I did not believe in a future life. It was beyond my reasoning powers. Now it is as clear to me as day light. We have an astral fac-simile of the material body . Jim what are you writing now ?

(Nothing of any importance.)

Why don't you write about this ?

(I should like to, but the expression of my opinions would be nothing. I must have facts.)

These I will give to you and to Hodgson if he is still interested in these things.

(Will people know about this possibility of communication ?)

They are sure to in the end. It is only a question of time when people in the material body will know all about it, and every one will be able to communicate.. I want all the fellows to know about me. What is Rogers writing ?

(A novel).

No, not that. Is he not writing some thing about me ?

(Yes, he is preparing a memorial of you).

That is nice ; it is pleasant to be remembered. It is very kind of him. He was always kind to me when I was alive...Berwick, how is he ? Give him my love. He is a good fellow. He is what I always thought him in life, trustworthy and honourable. How is Orenberg ? He has some of my letters. Give him my warmest love. He was always fond of me, though he understood me least of my friends. We fellows who are

eccentric are always misunderstood in life. I used to have fits of depression. I have none now. I am happy now. I want my father to know about this. We used to talk about spiritual things, but he will be hard to convince. My mother will be easier. (*Proceedings, Vol. XIII, pp. 300-301*).

All the references to persons, incidents and characters were correct.

On another occasion, an arrangement was made with G. P. that he should watch his father doing something definite which the Howards could not know and communicate his observations at the earliest opportunity. The next sitting was held on April 22 at which Mr. Howard was present. G. P. wrote:—

"I saw father and he took my photograph and took it to the artists to have it copied for me ..I went to Washington; my father will be hard to convince, my mother not so hard."

Mrs. Howard wrote to Mrs. Pelham about this and other matters mentioned at the sitting and got the following reply from Mr. Pelham:—

"The letters which you have written to my wife giving such extraordinary evidence of the intelligence exercised by George in some incomprehensible manner over the actions of his friends on earth have given food for constant reflection and wonder. Preconceived

notions about the future state have received a rude shock...My wife is writing.

Mrs. Pelham wrote :—

Some of the things you state are very inexplicable on any other theory than that George himself was the speaker. His father *did*, without my knowledge, take a photograph of him to a photographer here to copy—not enlarge. The negative had been broken. (*Proceedings, Vol. XIII, p. 304*).

A very dramatic incident occurred at the sitting of December 22, 1892. Mr. Howard strongly urged G. P. to give some unmistakable proof of his identity. "Do you doubt me, dear old fellow", answered G. P. Mr. Howard said that he simply wanted some test which would conclusively prove that the communicator was indeed G. P. "The transcription of the words written by G. P.," says Dr. Hodgson, "conveys, of course, no proper impression of the actual circumstances; the inert mass of the upper part of Mrs. Piper's body turned away from the right arm, and sagging down, as it were, limp and lifeless over Mrs. Howard's shoulder, but the right arm, and especially hand, mobile, intelligent, deprecatory, then impatient and fierce in the persistence of the writing which

followed, which contains too much of the personal element in G. P's life to be reproduced here. Several statements were read by me, and assented to by Mr. Howard, and then was written "private" and the hand gently pushed me away. I retired to the other side of the room, and Mr. Howard took my place close to the hand where he could read the writing. He did not, of course, read it aloud, and it was too private for my perusal. The hand as it reached the end of each sheet tore it off from the block book and thrust it wildly at Mr. Howard, and then continued writing. The circumstances narrated, Mr. Howard informed me, contained precisely the kind of test for which he had asked, and he said that he was "perfectly satisfied, perfectly."

G. P. never failed to recognise his friends. Each of them was addressed and spoken to exactly as the living G. P. would have done. Only in one case he failed to recognise an acquaintance. This failure is noteworthy. It is the case of Miss Warner, who had two sittings. At both the sittings, G. P. was rather cold and said

that he did not know Miss Warner very well:—

“I do not think I ever knew you very well. (Very little ; you used to come and see my mother) I heard of you, I suppose (I saw you several times. You used to come with Mr. Rogers). Yes I remembered about Mr. Rogers when I saw you before. (Yes, you spoke of him). Yes, but I cannot seem to place you. I long to place all of my friends, and could do so before I had been gone so long. You see I am farther away...I do not recall your face ; you must have changed (Dr. Hodgson—Do you remember Mrs. Warner?) [excitement in the medium's hand] of course, Oh, very well. For pity's sake, are you her little daughter ' (Yes) By Jove how you have grown . .’

These sittings were held 5 years after G. P.'s death and before his death, he had not seen Miss Warner for 3 years. During these 8 years the little girl had grown into a young woman and it was perfectly natural that G. P. should fail to recognise her at first sight.

Besides G. P. other “spirits” communicated, for whom G. P. acted as amanuensis, and proved their identity. One of the most remarkable of these communicators is an Italian lady whom Dr. Hodgson calls Madame Elisa Mannors. An incident con-

nected with her communications is thus described by Prof. Hyslop:—

"A deceased acquaintance of Dr. Hodgson, Madame Elisa, stated through Mrs. Piper that she had been present at the death-bed of a certain gentleman as he was dying, had spoken to him, and indicated that he had recognised her. She repeated what she had said to him from the "other side" as he was dying, and it was an unusual form of expression. That this had actually occurred at the death-bed of the person mentioned was confirmed by two near and surviving relatives who were present at the death-bed. The gentleman as he was dying had recognised the apparition of the deceased person and uttered the words as coming from her which were afterwards communicated through Mrs. Piper." (*Science and a Future Life*, P. 201).

Dr. Hodgson thus summarises the incidents connected with this communicator.—She was known to George Pelham, and her first appearance was to her sister Madame Frederica on May 17th, 1892 (about four months after the death of George Pelham). She (Madame Elisa Mannors) had died the previous summer. The cause of her death was designated by Phinuit, who also described correctly, purporting to repeat what she was telling him, some incidents which had occurred at her death-bed. The sister

inquired about a watch which had belonged to Madame Elisa, but the statements made at this sitting and to myself at subsequent sittings did not lead to its recovery. Some Italian was written by request, the lady being as familiar with Italian as with English, but only two or three common words were decipherable. The first names of sitter and communicator were given and the last name was both written and afterwards given by George Pelham to Phinuit. Some of the writing was of a personal character and some about the watch, and George Pelham stated correctly, *inter alia*, that the sitter's mother was present (in 'spirit') with the communicator and that he himself did not know her. The real names are very uncommon. The Italian for "It is well, patience," was whispered at the end of the sitting as though by direct control of the voice by Madame Elisa. Mrs. Piper, as has already been stated, does not know Italian.

I am sorry that I have no space to narrate further facts as astonishing as those which I have stated. The reader who wants to know more must read Dr. Hodgson's report

in S. P. R. Proceedings, Vol. XIII. G. P. succeeded in proving his identity up to the hilt. He repeatedly asserted that Phinuit was really a spirit who once lived on earth. It is the assurance of George Pelham and others that is the only ground for concluding that Phinuit is really a departed personality. Regarding the communications of G. P. Dr. Hodgson says:—

“In the persistence of his endeavour to overcome the difficulties of communication as far as possible, in the effect which he has produced by his counsels to myself as investigator, and to numerous other sitters and communicators, he has, in so far as I can form a judgment in a problem so complex and still presenting so much obscurity, displayed all the keenness and pertinacity which were eminently characteristic of G. P. living. The manifestations of this G. P. communicating have not been of a fitful and spasmodic character, they have exhibited the marks of a continuous living and persistent personality.”

George Pelham achieved one important result. He succeeded in convincing the cautious, level headed and sceptical Dr. Hodgson that the telepathic theory is not true and that spirit communication really takes place. G. P., as the reader will remember, had a long discussion with Dr.

Hodgson on the possibility of a future life before his death. He did not think that a future life was even conceivable, as he was unable to attach any meaning to such a thing as disembodied spirit. Dr. Hodgson agreed that it was very unlikely that the soul survived death but thought that it was, at any rate, conceivable. "The gross material body," argued he, "might be the shadow of a coarser and cruder form of mind-stuff, that it might be tenanted by a more subtle organic body composed of the luminiferous ether, that such ethereal body might be the correlate of the human personality, and that although the gross material body might disintegrate at death, the ethereal body might not." G. P. ultimately agreed that a future life was conceivable but said that it was quite incredible and it was then, says Dr. Hodgson, "that he pledged himself to do all that he could to establish a future life, if he died before me and found that there was a future life after all." How faithfully has he fulfilled his promise if the communicating G. P. be indeed the surviving spirit of the G. P. that once lived on earth!

Dr. Hodgson concludes his report with these words,—

"What my future beliefs may be, I do not know and it may be that future experiment in the lines of investigation before us may lead me to change my view ; but at the present time I cannot profess to have any doubt but that the chief "communicators" to whom I have referred in the foregoing pages, are veritably the personalities they claim to be, that they have survived the change we call death and that they have directly communicated with us whom we call living through Mrs. Piper's entranced organism."

Further experiment, as is well known, only confirmed Dr Hodgson in this conclusion. Referring to his conviction formed after years of patient observation of the trance phenomena of Mrs. Piper, Sir Oliver Lodge says ;—

Of all men at that time living, undoubtedly Dr. Hodgson had more experience of Mrs. Piper's phenomena than any other—for he devoted years of his life to the subject and made it practically his sole occupation. He did this because, after preliminary study, he recognised its great importance. He was by no means a credulous man—in fact he was distinctly sceptical, and many have been the spurious phenomena which he detected and exposed. In some respects he went, in my judgment, too far in his destructive career—he disbelieved in Mrs. Thompson, for instance, and he practically for the

time annihilated Eusapia Palladino,* the famous "Physical" medium—but hyper-scepticism is far more useful to the development of the subject than hyper-credulity, and when such a man is after adequate study decidedly and finally convinced, his opinions deserve and from those who knew him received, serious attention. Undoubtedly his views are entitled to great weight."

III.

Professor W. Romaine Newbold had a series of sittings with Mrs. Piper and obtained some very striking results. I shall briefly describe only one of the incidents in his series of sittings. Pelham in this case acted as intermediary for a deceased aunt of Prof. Newbold, called aunt Sallie, who died in 1875 when he was only ten years old. This aunt Sallie

* A large number of the continental savants and men of science remained convinced of the genuineness of Eusapia's phenomena in spite of the adverse report of the Society for Psychical Research. The Society found it necessary to investigate her phenomena again. The investigators, Mr. Hereward Carrington, Mr. W. W. Baggally and the Hon. Everard Fielding, all trained experts, presented a report about a year ago, unanimously declaring that the phenomena observed by them were all genuine !

recognised Prof Newbold with hesitation and wanted a test for his identification.

"There were two marriages in this case, mother and aunt grandma also (Prof. Newbold—I understand Mr. Pelham) just say this for their satisfaction so that they may be quite sure you understand them and that you are you."

Prof. Newbold's paternal grandfather was twice married. His second wife had a younger sister whom Prof. Newbold's father married. She is Prof Newbold's mother. The elder sister therefore is both his aunt and his step-grandmother. "Aunt Sallie" then proceeded to explain to Prof. Newbold the cause of her death in a peculiar manner. The hand stopped writing and motioned to Prof. Newbold. After several changes of position which seemed unsatisfactory to G. P., he got on his feet and the hand felt around the lower edge of his waistcoat and then paused to write, "Excuse this uncanny procedure." Finally, it pressed firmly on median line about the lowest button of his waistcoat and wrote, "Ask mother if she remembers this!" Prof. Newbold observes,—

"My aunt died of the effects of an operation for the removal of an ovarian cyst. When this was written

I looked over to Dr. Hodgson and said, 'she refers to the cause of her death; she died of a laparatomy.' The hand at once wrote, 'yes, yes, yes, yes sir'."

At another sitting the following words were written, "Carson the doctor took away my medicine much against my will, yet it is all right now." Prof. Newbold remarks.--

"It occurred to me that an old doctor named Carson had lived not far from our home when I was a child. I wondered whether he could have had anything to do with my aunt Sallie. I knew that she had lived near Philadelphia and had died at a hospital near New York. Upon inquiry I learned that she spent two weeks at our house near New York before going to the hospital and was attended by this Dr. Carson. I must have known this at the time but have totally forgotten it. The incident of the medicine cannot now be verified "

Discussing as to whether this case can be accounted for by telepathy, Prof. Newbold says:—

"The demand made by "aunt Sallie" that I should identify myself by expounding the significance of "two marriages in this case, mother and aunt grandma" also," admits of no satisfactory telepathic explanation. The fact was known to me and might have been got telepathically. But why is the dream personality of the only communicator who died in my childhood the only one who seeks to identify me?

Why does she allude in so indirect a fashion to the mode of her death? Certainly no stratum of my personality would have felt hesitation in alluding to so commonplace a matter as a laparatomy or would have lacked suitable language in which to express the allusion. Whence came the reference to "Carson the Dr.", a circumstance which I had totally forgotten, if I ever knew it. And, finally, why was the faded personality of this almost forgotten maiden aunt evoked at all? I was not ten years old when she died, and she had been dead twenty years. She was a teacher, lived in Philadelphia, died in a hospital in New York and was buried near Philadelphia. I do not know the exact date of her death or the exact place of her burial. Probably few persons besides her immediate relatives know that such a person ever existed, and even her relatives seldom think of her. Why were these dim memories so clearly reflected while others, far stronger, produced no effect? Why were my memories, in process of reflection, so refracted as to come seemingly not from my masculine and adult point of view but from that of a spinster aunt who could not at first recognise me with confidence, and who, taking it for granted that her little nephew of ten had not been informed as to the precise cause of her death, expected him, although grown to man's estate, to convey a very obvious allusion to his mother for interpretation without himself knowing what it meant?" (*Proceedings S. P. R.* Vol. XIV, P. 9).

The evidence for continued existence

furnished by Mrs. Piper's trance phenomena often appealed strongly to competent observers :—

"A friend of mine," says Prof. Newbold, "a scholar who has been known for his uncompromising opposition to every form of supernaturalism had a sitting with Mrs. Piper, at which very remarkable disclosures were made, and shortly afterwards said to me, in effect, "Scientific men cannot say much longer that there is no evidence for a future life. I have said it, but I shall say it no longer, I know now that there is evidence, for I have seen it. I do not believe in a future life. I regard it as one of the most improbable of theories. The evidence is scanty and ambiguous and insufficient, but it is evidence and it must be reckoned with."

In order to enable the reader to understand the next phase in the development of Mrs. Piper's trance phenomena and also on account of its own intrinsic importance, I must make a rather long digression at this point and give some account of the mediumship of W. Stainton Moses, known as M.A. (Oxon). Mr. Myers has given a full account of this remarkable and unquestionably genuine medium in two long papers published in the ninth and eleventh volumes of the proceedings of the Society

for Psychical Research and it is from these papers that I gather my materials.

The Rev. W. Stainton Moses was born in 1839 and received a very good education, taking his M.A. degree at Oxford in 1862. After taking his degree he was ordained by Bishop Wilberforce and accepted a curacy at Manghold in the Isle of Man at the age of 24. His religious views were those of the Church of England. He soon became very popular among his parishioners for his kindness and benevolence.

"On the occasion of an outbreak of small pox", says Mr. Myers, "he distinguished himself by his zeal and kindness, and it is recorded that in one case he helped to nurse and to bury a man whose malady was so violent that it was hard to get any one to approach him."

In 1871 he accepted a mastership in University College School and continued to fill this post until 1889. All who knew him well speak of his honesty and sincerity in the highest terms.

"Neither I nor, so far as I know, any person acquainted with Mr. Moses," writes Mr. Myers, "has ever entertained any doubt regarding his sanity and probity."

He was, from all accounts, a most estimable man.

"However perplexed for an explanation" (of his phenomena,) says Mr Massey, "the crassest prejudice has recoiled from ever suggesting a doubt of the truth and honesty of Stainton Moses."

His mediumistic faculty was first developed in 1872. The physical phenomena began in 1872 and continued till 1881, becoming less and less frequent towards the end of this period. The automatic writing began in 1873 and ceased in 1883. Stainton Moses was never a public medium. His seances were strictly private, attended only by his personal friends, Dr. S. T. Speer, Mrs. Speer and occasionally by Mr. F. W. Percival (Barrister-at-law and examiner in the education department). Notes of the phenomena that occurred were taken at the time and independently by Dr. Speer, Mrs. Speer and Mr. Moses himself, when he was not in trance. These notes fully agree with each other. The importance of Dr. Speer as a witness of these phenomena is so great that it is necessary to quote here the testimony of Dr. Marshall Hall,

F.R.S. It shows how reliable and competent an observer he was.

"I have great satisfaction in bearing my testimony to the talents and acquirements of Dr. Stanhope Templeman Speer. Dr. Speer has had unusual advantages in having been at the medical schools, not only of London and Edinburgh but of Paris and Montpellier and he has availed himself of these advantages with extraordinary diligence and talent. He ranks among our most distinguished rising physicians." "Dr. Speer's cast of mind," says Mr. Myers, "was strongly materialistic and it is remarkable that his interest in Mr. Moses's phenomena was from first to last of a purely scientific, as contrasted with an emotional or a religious nature."

Stainton Moses was for a long time averse to the publication of the notes of his experiences. In his later years, he published some of them in the spiritualist journal, *Light*, but the bulk of them was never published during his life-time and Mr. Myers first revealed to the world portions of them. It will thus be seen that Mr. Moses had no motive for deceiving anybody, even if he could be regarded as capable of deception. But even the bitterest enemies of spiritualism have never suggested that Stainton Moses was dishonest. It is absurd to accuse a man of deception who does not want to make

his experiences public. Mr. Moses, as has already been said, was not only an automatic writer but also a physical medium. The series of physical manifestations and the series of automatic writings and trance utterances were very intimately connected with each other. The physical phenomena were intended to give authority to the utterances and writings which professed to come from the same source. The chief controls of Stainton Moses were spirits who gave such names as Emperor, Rector, Doctor, Mentor, Prudents. They from time to time revealed to Mr. Moses the names which they said belonged to them in earth-life. These names Mr. Moses never let any one know except Mr. Myers and one or two other persons. They, we are given to understand, are of illustrious persons belonging to very remote generations. Emperor was the chief of the band and the writing was usually done by Rector.

"Their constantly avowed object," says Mr. Myers, "was the promulgation through Mr. Moses of certain religious and philosophical views, and the physical manifestations are throughout described as designed merely as a proof of power and a basis for the authority claimed for the serious teachings."

These teachings Mr Moses published under the title of *Spirit Teachings*. It is one of the most remarkable books that I have ever read. Even if we suppose that the source of it was not any spirit but Mr. Moses's subliminal mind, it is a striking proof of the feat which the human mind, working unconsciously or subconsciously, can accomplish.

Mr. Myers has given a detailed account of the physical phenomena of Stainton Moses. The following is an abridgement of a short account of them by Mr. Charlton T. Speer, son of Dr. Speer.

Great variety of raps, often given simultaneously, and ranging in force from the tapping of a finger nail to the tread of a foot sufficiently heavy to shake the room. Each spirit *always* had its own distinctive rap, many of them so peculiar as to be immediately recognisable.

Raps which answered questions coherently and with the greatest distinctness, and also gave messages, sometimes of considerable length, through the medium of the alphabet. Some of the higher spirits never manifested by raps at all, after the first few seances, but announced their presence by a note of music, or the flash of a light.

Numerous lights were generally visible to all the sitters. These lights were of two different kinds—

objective and subjective. The former usually resembled small illuminated globes, which shone brightly and steadily, often moved rapidly about the room, and were visible to all the sitters. The subjective lights were described as being large masses of luminous vapour floating round the room and assuming a variety of shapes. Dr. Speer and myself, being of entirely unmediumistic temperaments, were only able to see the objective lights, but Mr. Stainton Moses, Mrs. Speer and other occasional sitters frequently saw and described those which were merely subjective.

Scents of various descriptions were always brought to the circle, the most common being musk, verberna, new mown hay, and one unfamiliar odour, which we were told was called spirit-scent. Sometimes breezes heavy with perfume swept round the circle, at other times quantities of liquid musk etc. would be poured on to the hands of the sitters, and also by request, on to our handkerchiefs. At the close of a seance scent was nearly always found to be oozing out of the medium's head, and the more frequently it was wiped away the stronger and more plentiful it became.

The musical sounds, which were many and varied, formed a very important item in the list of phenomena which occurred in our presence. Having myself had a thorough musical education, I was able to estimate at its proper value the importance of these particular manifestations, and was also more or less in a position to judge of the possibility or impossibility of their being produced by natural means, or through human agency. These sounds may, roughly speaking, be

divided into two classes—those which obviously proceeded from an instrument—a harmonium—in a room, whilst the hands of all the sitters were joined round the table; and those which were produced in a room in which there was no instrument of any kind whatever. These latter were, of course, by far the most wonderful.

Direct writing (*i.e.* writing not by the hand of the medium) was often given, sometimes on a sheet of paper placed in the centre of the table, and equidistant from all the sitters; at other times one of us would place our hands on a piece of paper previously dated and initialled, and usually a message was found written upon it at the conclusion of the seance.

We usually placed a pencil upon the paper, but sometimes we only provided a small piece of lead—the results bring the same in both cases, usually, the writing took the form of answering questions which we had asked but sometimes short independent communications were given, and also messages of greeting.

Movements of heavy bodies, such as tables and chairs were by no means infrequent. Sometimes the table would be tilted at a considerable angle. At other times the table would move away from the sitters on one side and be propelled irresistibly against those on the other compelling them to shift their chairs in order to avoid the advance of so heavy a piece of furniture. The table in question, at which we usually sat, was an extremely weighty dining table made of solid Honduras Mahogany."

"The passage of matter through matter was sometimes strikingly demonstrated by the bringing of various articles from other rooms, though the doors were closed and bolted. Photographs, picture-frames, books, and other objects were frequently so brought, both from rooms on the same floor and from those above. How they came through the closed doors I cannot say, except by some process of dematerialisation, but come they certainly did, apparently, none the worse for the process, whatever it might have been."*

The physical phenomena of Stainton Moses are not the only ones on record. Those of D. D. Home were observed by so eminent a man of science as Sir William Crookes and we have his testimony to the genuineness of them. They were entirely analogous to those of Stainton Moses. An account of Sir William Crookes's experiences will be found in his book, *Researches in the phenomena of spiritualism*, now out of print and difficult to obtain. Sir William

* As descent from above or an upward movement would be unintelligible to beings acquainted only with two dimensions of space, so, perhaps, are these phenomena mysterious to us whose conception of space is that it possesses three dimensions. But what reason is there to suppose that *our* conception of space is the ultimate conception

Crookes re-affirmed his conviction as to the genuineness of the phenomena of D. D. Home in his Presidential address to the British Association at Bristol in 1898.

"No incident in my scientific career," observed he, "is more widely known than the part I took many years ago in certain psychic researches. Thirty years have passed since I published an account of experiments tending to show that outside our scientific knowledge there exists a force exercised by intelligence differing from the ordinary intelligence common to mortals. This fact in my life is, of course, well understood by those who honoured me with the invitation to become your president. Perhaps among my audience some may feel curious as to whether I shall speak out or be silent. I elect to speak, although briefly. To enter at length on a still debatable subject would be unduly to insist on a topic which,—as Wallace, Lodge and Barrett have already shown—though not unfitted for discussion at these meetings, does not yet enlist the interest of the majority of my scientific brethren. To ignore the subject would be an act of cowardice—an act of cowardice I feel no temptation to commit. To stop short in any research that bids fair to widen the gates of knowledge, to recoil from fear of difficulty or adverse criticism, is to bring reproach on science. There is nothing for the investigator to do but to go straight on, 'to explore up and down, inch by inch, with the taper his reason ;' to follow the light wherever it may lead, even should it at times resemble a will-o'-the-wisp. I have nothing to retract. I adhere

to my already published statements. Indeed I might add much thereto."

The case of Eusapia Palladino is analogous to those of Moses and Home, so far as the physical phenomena are concerned. She was branded as a fraudulent medium by the Society for Psychical Research, after Dr. Hodgson had detected her tricks at the Cambridge sittings. Sir Oliver Lodge, however, retained his conviction that some at least of the phenomena observed by him could not be explained by fraud. After Eusapia was dropped by the Society for Psychical Research, she came under the observation of many continental savants. They were men like Cesare Lombroso, Camille Flammarion, Professor Shiaparelli, the famous Astronomer, Professor Richet, Professor Curie, M. Henri Bergson, M. Charpentier, Professor Bottazzi and others. The opinion of practically all these observers "is that after making every allowance for such fraud as she may occasionally permit herself to indulge in, Eusapia is nevertheless possessed of faculties of some supernormal kind." The Society for Psychical Research never reconsiders a case once rejected by

it as false or suspicious. But they found it impossible to ignore the conclusion formed by so many eminent men after personal observations and decided, against their standing rule, to reinvestigate the phenomena of Eusapia Palladino. Messrs. Hereward Carrington, W. W. Baggally and the Hon. Everard Fielding, well-known experts in the domain of conjuring, were deputed to this task. They, after very careful investigations, reported early in 1909 that the phenomena observed by them were genuine. Some of these phenomena were,—movements and levitations of the seance table ; raps on the table ; movement of a tambourine ; production of a tangible hand ; production of cold breeze from the medium's brow ; several appearances of objects like heads and of grey and white objects from cabinet, also of a hand ; gentle twanging of guitar ; appearance of lights ; series of transportation of objects from inside cabinet. (*Proceedings, S. P. R.* Vol. xxiii, pp. 329-30).

The main object of Imperator, the chief spirit guide of Stainton Moses, was to inculcate certain religious and philosophical doctrines. The physical phenomena were

intended merely to prove that supernatural agencies were at work. Regarding his automatic writing and the relation of the teachings of Imperator to his own views, Mr. Moses writes,—

“It is an interesting subject for speculation whether my own thoughts entered into the subject-matter of the communications. I took extraordinary pains to prevent any such admixture. At first the writing was slow, and it was necessary for me to follow it with my eye but even then the thoughts were not my thoughts. Very soon the messages assumed a character of which I had no doubt whatever that the thought was opposed to my own. But I cultivated the power of occupying my mind with other things during the time that the writing was going on, and was able to read an abstruse book, and follow out a line of close reasoning while the message was written with unbroken regularity. Messages so written extended over many pages, and in their course there is no correction, no fault in composition, and often a sustained vigour and beauty of style. It is certain that the mass of ideas conveyed to me were alien to my own opinions, were, in the main, opposed to my settled convictions and moreover that in several cases, information of which I was assuredly ignorant, clear precise and definite in form, susceptible of verification, and always exact were thus conveyed to me,”

Besides producing physical phenomena Imperator and his associates often assisted

other spirits to communicate in order to give evidence of identity and of survival after death. I describe below the striking cases of Abraham Florentine and "Blanche Abercrombie."

In the month of August 1874, Stainton Moses was staying with Dr. Speer at Shanklin, Isle of Wight. He had a number of sittings there, at one of which a spirit who gave his name as Abraham Florentine communicated. He said that he had taken part in the war of 1812 and that he had recently entered spirit life at the age of 83 years 1 month 17 days. The communication was made in a peculiar manner. Mr. Moses and two others were seated round a heavy table which two persons could move with difficulty. This table commenced to tilt. The sitters repeated the alphabet.

"So eager was the communicating spirit," says Mr. Moses, "that the table rose some seconds before the required letter was arrived at. In order to mark T it would rise, quivering with excitement, in a manner perfectly indescribable, about K, and then descend at T with a thump. The whole message was given in this way."

"So eager and impetuous was the spirit

was forbidden by the spirit herself, for a reason which was at once obvious to me when I read the case, but which was not, so far as I can tell, fully known to Mr. Moses. The lady's son, whom I have since consulted, supports the prohibition, and I have consequently changed the name and omitted the dates.

The lady died on a Sunday afternoon, about twenty years ago, at a country house about 200 miles from London. Her death, which was regarded as an event of public interest, was at once telegraphed to London, and appeared in Monday's *Times*; but, of course on Sunday evening, no one in London, save the Press and perhaps the immediate family, was cognisant of the fact. It will be seen that on that evening, near midnight, a communication, purporting to come from her, was made to Mr. Moses at his secluded lodgings in the north of London. The identity was some days later corroborated by a few lines purporting to come directly from her, and to be in her handwriting. There is no reason to suppose that Mr. Moses had ever seen this handwriting. His one known meeting with this lady and her husband had been at a seance—not, of course, of his own where he had been offended by the strongly expressed disbelief of the husband in the possibility of any such phenomena.

On receiving these messages Mr. Moses seems to have mentioned them to no one, and simply gulimmed down the pages in his MS. book marking the book outside "private matter". The book when placed in

my hands was still thus gummed down, although Mrs. Speer was cognisant of the communication. I opened the page, (as instructed by the executors) and was surprised to find a brief letter which, though containing no definite facts, was entirely characteristic of the Blanche Abercrombie whom I had known. But although I had received letters from her in life, I had no recollection of her handwriting. I happened to know a son of her sufficiently well to be able to ask his aid—aid which, I may add, he would have been most unlikely to afford to a stranger. He lent me a letter for comparison. The strong resemblance was at once obvious, but the A of the surname was made in the letter in a way quite different from that adopted in the automatic script. The son then allowed me to study a long series of letters, reaching down till almost the date of her death. From these it appeared that during the last year of her life she had taken to writing the A (as her husband had always done) in the way in which it was written in the automatic script.

The resemblance of handwriting appeared both to the son and to myself to be incontestable; but as we desired an experienced opinion he allowed me to submit the notebook and two letters to Dr. Hodgson. Readers of these Proceedings may remember that Dr. Hodgson succeeded in tracing the authorship of the "Koot Hoomi" letters to Madame Blavatsky and to Damodar, by evidence based on a minute analysis of letters. (Dr. Hodgson in his report, which need not be quoted here says,—"I have no doubt whatever

that the person who wrote the notebook writing intended to reproduce the writing of Blanche Abercrombie.") The chances necessary to secure a verification of this case was more complex than can here be fully explained. This lady, who was quite alien to these researches, had been dead about twenty years when her posthumous letter was discovered in Mr. Moses's private notebook by one of the very few surviving persons who had both known her well enough to recognise the characteristic quality of the message and were also sufficiently interested in spirit identity to get the handwritings compared and the case recorded."

The following are the evidential portions of the entries in Stainton Moses's note book,—

"Mentor (a spirit-guide of Moses) writes,—It is a spirit who has just quitted the body. Blanche Abercrombie in the flesh. I have brought her. No more M.

Q. Do you mean.—

No reply. Sunday night about midnight. The information is unknown to me.

Monday morning.

Q. I wish for information about last night. Is that true? Was it Mentor?

A. Yes, good friend, it was Mentor, who took pity on a spirit that was desirous to reverse former errors. She desires us to say so. She was ever an enquiring spirit, and was called suddenly from your earth. She will rest anon. One more proof has been now given of continuity of existence. Be thankful

and meditate with prayer. Seek not more now, but cease. We do not wish you to ask any questions now.

† Imperator Servus Dei.*

(A few days later) A spirit who has before communicated will write for you herself. She will then leave you, having given the evidence required.

"I should much like to speak more with you, but it is not permitted. You have sacred truth. I know but little yet. I have much, much to learn. It is like my handwriting as evidence to you."

Blanche Abercrombie.

Stainton Moses[†] died in 1892. Towards the end of his life, he suffered a great deal from suppressed gout, chronic bronchitis, Bright's disease.

"When in September 1892," says Mr. Myers, "he passed from earth, we may surely trust that his achievements here had won their way to promotion, and his sufferings to repose." "With the even tenour of this straightforward and reputable life," observes the same writer, "was inwoven a chain of mysteries which in what way so-ever they be explained make that life one of the most extraordinary which our century has seen."

To resume the main thread of our narrative: At the sitting with Mrs. Piper on June 19th, 1895, George Pelham told Prof.

* All the messages coming direct from Imperator are indicated by a sign of the cross.

Newbold that the soul did not carry with it into the spirit world its passions and animal appetites. This led Prof. Newbold to ask G. P. whether the view expressed in Stainton Moses's *Spirit Teachings* that the soul is very slowly purified of its passions and appetites in the other world was true. G. P. emphatically said that it was not so. He was next asked whether he could manage to induce Stainton Moses to communicate. He replied that he would try. After much difficulty Stainton Moses, who, G. P. said, was in another part of their world was brought and purported to communicate. His communications, however, were very confused and incoherent. He admitted that the particular doctrine in *Spirit Teachings* to which reference has been made was not true and accounted for the mistake by saying that the teaching of his spirit guides was in this particular misinterpreted by his own mind as the doctrine in question was strongly held by him. Moses was next asked to give the names of his spirit-guides known as Imperator, Rector and Doctor. Prof. Newbold said to Moses that the names which these

spirit-guides gave to him when alive were known only to Mr. Myers and if he could correctly give them that would be a splendid proof of his identity. Moses utterly failed to do this and was extremely confused in his communications. Dr. Hodgson pointed out to G. P. the importance of Moses being clear. The upshot of all this was that Stainton Moses said that he would obtain the assistance of his former controls. 'Imperator and Rector appeared later on and demanded that the control of the "machine", as the entranced Mrs. Piper was called by them, should be completely handed over to them. This was agreed to and the immediate effect of the control passing over to Imperator was a great improvement in the clearness of the communications made through her. With the assumption of supreme control by Imperator, Phinuit ceased to appear.

Professor James Hyslop of Columbia University arranged for a series of sittings with Mrs. Piper during the Imperator regime. He, to use a famous phrase, was roused from his dogmatic slumber by Dr. Hodgson's second report and felt it necessary to have

some personal sittings in order to understand thoroughly the nature of the phenomena. He fully realised the force of Dr. Hodgson's summing up in favour of the spiritistic hypothesis and found it impossible to ignore the evidence presented by him. Professor Hyslop's sittings were held in 1898. He took extraordinary precautions against his identity being known to Mrs. Piper. He went to the sittings in a closed coach and while he was several hundred feet from the house, he put on a mask covering the whole face. When he entered the house, Dr. Hodgson introduced him as Mr. Smith. He bowed in silence, did not shake hands with Mrs. Piper and remained absolutely silent as long as she did not fall into trance. Various deceased relatives of Prof. Hyslop manifested themselves and purported to communicate and gave striking proofs of their identity. One of the most important of them was Prof. Hyslop's father, Mr. Robert Hyslop. I quote below Prof. Hyslop's shorter account of some of these sittings,—

“At the end of a sitting as Mrs. Piper was coming out of trance, she gave the surname ‘Hyslop’ and

said 'Tell him, I am his father.' My father had died a little more than two years previous. During the sitting the name Eliza was given, that of my aunt who had suddenly lost her husband about three weeks before in the West, and some incidents mentioned in her life with her husband that were characteristic, and an allusion, apparently made by father, to a dream of this aunt, saying that she had seen him in it. Inquiry proved this to be a fact. The uncle was mentioned but the mistake in the name spoiled its evidential force. At the third sitting began a series of incidents of considerable value. The first allusion to it was in the statement that 'It was not a hallucination but a reality, but I felt that it would be possible to reach you.' A little later in the same sitting he said that he had promised to come back if possible and let me know that he was not annihilated, adding: 'I remember well our talks about this life and its conditions, and there was a great question of doubt as to the possibility of communication. That, if I remember rightly, was the one question we talked over.' At the next sitting recurring to the same subject he asked me: 'What do you remember, James, of our talks about Swedenborg? Do you remember of our talking one evening in the Library about his description of the Bible?' In a sitting held by Dr. Hodgson in my behalf, while I remained in New York, and recurring to this subject of our conversation again, he said: 'Shut out the thought theory (meaning the telepathic theory) and do not let it trouble you,' and mentioned Swedenborg again.

Later still on the same subject he said ; ' Do you remember our conversation on this subject ? (yes, I do Can you tell me when it was.) Yes. Do you remember of my last visit your last visit with me ? (yes, I remember it well.) It was more particularly on this occasion than before. (yes, that is right. Do you know what I was doing just before I made the visit ?) Yes. I believe you had been experimenting on the subject, and I remember of your telling me something about hypnotism. (Yes, I remember that well) And what did you tell me about some kind of manifestation which you were in doubt about ? (It was about apparitions near the point of death) [excitement in hand] Oh yes, indeed, I recall it very well, and you told me about a young woman who had had some experiments and dreams.' The next day recurring to the topic again I was asked if I remembered what he said when I told him about dreams.

The facts were these. About a year before my father's death I was lecturing in Indianapolis on this subject and surprised my father, and paid him my last visit. During the three or four days of that visit we had many hour's talk on the phenomena of psychic research¹, including thought transference, hallucinations, apparitions, dreams, hypnotism and an experiment that I had performed, in connection with a coincidental dream by a lady with whom I had also performed some experiments in crystal vision. I explained apparitions on that occasion as possibly only hallucinations, and was exceedingly sceptical about them, though admitting that they might be

more. This was the only occasion on which we had any extended conversation on the subject. We talked of Swedenborg in our conversations but I had completely forgotten it, and had to ascertain its truth from my step-mother, who remembered it well, as she had to ask my father who Swedenborg was after I left. My father was not a spiritualist, in fact, did not know enough to despise it as most people do, and I suppose that he knew nothing of Swedenborg. I had explained the Piper case as presented in the first two reports by thought transference, and hence the pertinence of the exhortation to 'shut out the thought theory.'" (*Science and a future life*. Pp. 216-18).

At another sitting Professor Hyslop's father said that his voice was the last he had heard. Professor Hyslop asked him what medicine he had got for him from New York. The word "Himi" was written and in connection with it strychnine was also mentioned. The medicine bought for him was Hyomei. Prof. Hyslop did not then understand the significance of the reference to strychnine, but on enquiry from other members of the family he learned that his father used to take strychnine with the Hyomei. A black skull cap was mentioned and it was stated that Hettie's mother had made it for Prof. Hyslop's father. Hettie is

the name of Prof. Hyslop's half-sister. He knew nothing about this cap and wrote to his step-mother about it. He learned from her that she had made a cap for Mr. Robert Hyslop, as he was very bald and complained of feeling his head cold during the night.

On another occasion, Robert Hyslop asked, "Do you remember the penknife I cut my nails with?" "No father, not very well." "The little penknife with the brown handle. You certainly must remember it." "Was this after you went West?" "Yes." Prof. Hyslop knew nothing about such a penknife. He wrote to his brother, sister and step-mother separately, asking them if his father ever possessed the kind of knife described, without giving them any reason for making the inquiry. All of them replied that it was so and that the knife still existed.

Many of the expressions used during these sittings were peculiar to Mr. Robert Hyslop. He was a very orthodox Christian, a rigid Calvinist. One day Dr. Hodgson said to him, "Mr. Hyslop you ought to look for my father and make friends with him. He had religious ideas like

yours. I think you would understand each other very well, and I should be pleased." At the next sitting the following reply was made to Dr. Hodgson, "I have met your father; we talked, and we liked each other very much, but he was not very orthodox when he was alive." Dr. Hodgson's father was a Wesleyan and therefore held more liberal views than Mr. Robert Hyslop. On another occasion, Robert Hyslop observed, "Orthodoxy does not matter here; I should have changed my mind about many things if I had known." At another sitting, speaking to Prof. Hyslop he said, "Let that thought theory alone. I made theories all my life, and what good did it do to me? It only filled my mind with doubts."

These are only a few of a large number of such incidents. The description of the most interesting of them would take so much space that I am reluctantly obliged to pass them over.

What happened to Dr. Hodgson happened to Prof. Hyslop also. He was led to adopt spirit communication as the best hypothesis for the explanation of Mrs. Piper's

trance phenomena. As is so often the case with philosophers and men of science, Prof. Hyslop had been a thorough disbeliever in a future life before he was convinced of the existence of strong evidence for the reality of it by the communications of George Pelham and his own observations.

IV.

Before we proceed further with the citation of evidence, it is desirable to pause a while and consider the adequacy or otherwise of the rival hypotheses of telepathy and spirit communication to explain facts of the kind which I have narrated. As regards the truth of the facts themselves, I do not think that there can be any reasonable doubt. They have been observed and vouched for by men whose authority cannot be light-heartedly set aside. Sir William Crookes, Sir Oliver Lodge, Dr. A. R. Wallace, Cesare Lombroso and others like them are stars of the first magnitude in the firmament of science and if we unhesitatingly accept their scientific discoveries, without ourselves veri-

fying the truth of them, there is no reason why we should be particularly sceptical when they assure us that they have satisfied themselves by their own observations that phenomena inexplicable by the known laws of nature and apparently controlled by some intelligence other than human do sometimes occur. When Sir William Crookes discovered Thallium the world acclaimed him as a great savant, when he learnedly discourses on repulsion from radiation, radiant matter, protyle, monium, victorium and such other things, people listen to him with respect and implicitly believe that what he says must be true whether they understand him or not, but when the same Sir William Crookes declares that he has seen and touched the materialised form of the spirit "Katie King" and has repeatedly photographed it they grow sceptical and even question his sanity. It is not known that when Sir William Crookes made his researches in the phenomena of spiritualism, he was on the verge of insanity. What is known is that long after this he was knighted for his pre-eminence in science and

was honoured with the Presidentship of the British Association. When Schiaparelli announces that he has observed markings on the planet Mars that look like canals, you listen to him with gaping wonder, but when the identical Schiaparelli says that he has observed physical phenomena to occur at the seances of Eusapia Palladino, why refuse to accept his testimony? No doubt there are men who will say that they are not prepared to be guided by mere authority, however high, but are determined to base their beliefs and conclusions on their own observations. I admire such men and only wish that it was possible for lesser mortals to be like them. They no doubt made voyages themselves to the Malay Archipelago and the Galapagos islands and observed the flora and fauna there before accepting the facts on which the theory of Wallace and Darwin is based, never said that Saturn has rings and Jupiter five moons until they saw them with their own eyes and do not believe that such a man as Napoleon ever existed because they never saw him. But what is possible for them is not possible for every body. Ordinary men

must in every sphere of life be content to be guided by the evidence of reliable witnesses on questions of fact. The only thing that can legitimately be demanded is that the men whose evidence we are called upon to accept are competent and trained observers of fact. It is a well known truth that observation is often unconsciously influenced by the prepossessions of the mind. All the distinguished men whom I have named began their investigations with a strong bias *against* supernormal phenomena. That they should have been ultimately convinced conclusively proves how insistent and incontestable the facts were.

For these reasons, I consider that it is a mere waste of time to discuss whether we should believe the eminent men who affirm that they have witnessed supernormal phenomena to occur in their presence under test conditions. The facts, I say, cannot be gainsaid. Because some people are so constituted that they cannot believe them it does not follow that they are unreal. The King of Siam could not believe an English traveller when he told him that in his country water sometimes

became as hard as stone and punished the Englishman for daring to tell a lie in His Majesty's august presence. The only question is how the facts are to be interpreted. I fully admit that in *interpreting* the facts we must exercise our own judgment rather than accept the opinions of others, though I am bound to say that even in this respect we cannot dismiss with a wave of the hand the convictions deliberately formed after mature consideration by successful investigators of nature and recognised leaders of thought. If, for example, I listen with profound respect, to Sir Oliver Lodge's exposition of the Lodge coherer and his new theory of electricity, I do not see why I should be hyper-critical when he deliberately declares that—

"A good case has been made out that lucid moments of intercourse with deceased persons may in the best cases supervene" and that "the boundary between the two states—the known and the unknown is wearing thin in places and like excavators engaged in boring a tunnel from opposite ends, amid the roar of water and other noises, we are beginning to hear now and again the strokes of pick-axes of our comrades on the other side."

Those who for some reason or other seek

to avoid the theory of spirit communication attempt to explain the facts under consideration by telepathy. I have already explained, briefly, what the telepathic theory is and now proceed to consider whether it is capable of accounting for the facts. If all the communications purporting to come from spirits were clear, if all the statements made by them were correct, if confusions and incoherences never occurred, then, strange as it may sound, a strong case might have been made out for telepathy. But this is not what happens. Even the clearest communicators are not always free from incoherences, mistakes are constantly made and facts well known to the sitters and prominent in their minds fail to be reproduced. On the spiritistic hypothesis these things, as we shall see, are easily explicable, but they are fatal to the telepathic theory. Remember that in order to explain the facts, we have to conceive of telepathy as a practically omniscient faculty which in some way extends to all living minds and has access to their memories. Mrs. Piper's secondary personality personating George Pelham, in order to

satisfy John Hart, taps, on the spur of the moment, the memory of James Howard at a distance and picks up the expression, "I will solve the problems Katharine", as a splendid proof of identity. A process or a power that can perform such a miracle cannot be supposed to have any limitation. Nor is this all. Telepathy must not only have access to the minds of distant persons, but be capable of *selecting* the facts relevant to the purpose of the moment. Now if such be the powers of telepathy, how is it that it so often fails to seize upon incidents perfectly known to the sitter? Why does it make mistakes at all? The failures become explicable only on the supposition that telepathy is a process of limited range and subject to all sorts of unknown limitations. But in that case how are the successes possible? In short, on the telepathic hypothesis, the successes cannot be explained if the failures are explained and the failures cannot be explained if the successes are explained. It must not be forgotten that an omniscient telepathy of the kind needed to explain the phenomena presented is itself

a hypothesis and not a *vera causa*. There is not a scrap of experimental evidence in support of it. The only thing which has been experimentally proved is that under certain unknown conditions the mind of the operator can influence the mind of the percipient. What we have to suppose, however, in order to account for what *prima facie* are messages coming from spirits is that the medium's subliminal mind goes, in some mysterious fashion, in quest of facts required for deceiving the sitters and manages somehow or other to get hold of them precisely at the moment when they are needed ! Truly does Professor Hyslop observe that—

“It represents a process far more incredible than spirits, and no intelligent man will resort to the belief of it in any haste. Only a superstitious prejudice against the possibility of spirits will induce a man to betray such credulity as the acceptance of universal telepathy. A man that can believe it in the present state of human knowledge can believe any thing and ought to be tolerant of those who have a lurking suspicion that there might be such a thing as dis-carnate spirits.”

A distinctive feature of the phenomena is that the messages purport to come from

different sources. The hand and voice of Mrs. Piper are sometimes simultaneously controlled by different communicators sending different messages and frequent changes of communicators take place. Further there is very often the appearance of consultations taking place among spirits "on the other side" and bits of conversations not intended for the sitters appear to get transmitted unintentionally. All this is perfectly intelligible on the spiritistic hypothesis but is not intelligible on the telepathic hypothesis. Of course it may be urged that a single fiendish secondary personality deliberately does all this in order to convey the false impression that spirits are communicating. But Dr. Hodgson does not think that any one would continue to regard such a supposition as plausible "after witnessing and studying the numerous coherent groups of memories connected with different persons, the characteristic emotional tendencies distinguishing such different persons, the excessive complication of the acting required, and the absence of any apparent bond of union for the associated thoughts and feelings indicative of each individuality, save some persistent basis of that individuality itself."

Telepathy does not explain why some

communicators are clear, while others are confused and incoherent. Why should it be more successful in having access to the incidents connected with one departed personality than in getting hold of facts connected with another? For example, Dr. Hodgson states that suicides, as a rule, are so confused that they are hardly able to send coherent messages. There is absolutely no reason why telepathy should find it so difficult to pick up necessary facts and incidents in order to personate a man who has committed suicide. The mode of death of an individual can have no conceivable relation to the remembrance of him by living persons from whose memories telepathy is supposed to draw the requisite materials to befool the sitter. The hypothesis of spirit communication can easily account for such differences. They are due to differences in the personal equation of the communicators. It is perfectly natural that some spirits should be better able to communicate than others. A man commits suicide when he is more or less in an abnormal state of mind. This abnormal mental condition may long continue after

death and prevent the spirit from sending coherent messages if he ever attempts to do so.

Many of the facts on record are of such a nature that in order to explain them by telepathy, we have to make incredible assumptions and suppositions, while the hypothesis of spirit return explains them in the simplest and most natural manner. Take the case of G. P.'s non-recognition of Miss Warner for example. If the communicator was really G. P., it was quite in accordance with probabilities that he should be unable to recognise her. But why should telepathy fail in this particular instance, unless we suppose that Mrs. Piper's secondary personality was astute enough to perceive that the purpose of the deception would be accomplished if it pretended not to recognise Miss Warner, because, in that case, people would argue that it was only natural that a spirit should be unable to recognise a girl who had become a woman during the eight years that G. P. had not seen her ! In the case of "Aunt Sallie", Prof. Newbold has shown how difficult it is to explain it by

telepathy. The following incident described in Dr. Hodgson's second report is another illustration of the difficulty of the telepathic theory.

"Miss Edmund was holding a sitting on behalf of a lady entirely unconnected with G. P. and his group of friends. G. P. wrote a little. As Mrs. Piper was coming out of the trance, the voice shouted excitedly ; "Tell Aleck Bousser (pseudonym), tell Aleck Bousser not to leave them alone." Miss Edmund knew nothing of Aleck Bousser, but he was well-known to me. He was an intimate friend of G. P. and was also the husband of Madame Frederica, the living sister of Madame Elisa for whom G. P. had acted as amanuensis on more than one occasion. I sent the message immediately to Aleck Bousser and received the following reply. 'There certainly do happen to be some people I just was happening to have been debating about in my own mind in a way that makes your short message perfectly significant and natural. I am sorry thus to be obliged to feed your credulity, for I hate your spirits'. I understood, as it was described later, that Madame Elisa arrived with this message too late to give it herself, and G. P. gave it to the 'returning consciousness' of Mrs. Piper. That Madame Elisa should select some significant circumstance in connection with living friends or relatives is intelligible ; but to suppose that a fragment of Mrs. Piper's personality selects it is not intelligible,— it is not explanatory, and suggests no order."

The telepathic explanation of the pheno-

mena under consideration raises the serious problem whether, consistently with it, it is possible to believe that the universe is under moral government. The hidden regions of the mind, whenever surveyed, reveal such an appalling villainy that the morality of the supra-liminal consciousness becomes, by contrast, a hideous mockery. Rub off the superficial veneer of culture and goodness and you will see how ugly human nature is. The hopeless depravity of the deeper strata of the mind must render all moral efforts and spiritual struggles futile and meaningless. Whenever, in trance, the subliminal self comes out into the open a veritable devil stands revealed. I cannot conceive of anything more fiendish than the sustained attempt on the part of the secondary personality to persuade men that there is a future life by palming off on them as spirit messages facts gathered from the minds of the living by means of the powerful weapon of telepathy unscrupulously used. What is worse, the secondary personality, on the hypothesis we are considering, does not hesitate even to go through mock prayers in order to

make the deception complete. At one of Prof. Hyslop's sittings, for example, Imperator began the proceedings with the following prayer,—

"Holy Father, we are with Thee in all Thy ways and to Thee we come in all things. We ask Thee to give us Thy tender love and care. Bestow Thy blessings upon this Thy fellow creature. Teach him to walk in the path of righteousness and truth. He needs Thy loving care. Teach him in all things to do Thy holy will. Without Thy care we are indeed bereft. Watch over and guide his footsteps and lead him into light. Father we beseech Thee to so open the blinded eyes of mortals that they may know more of Thee and Thy tender love and care."

Again on another occasion,—

"Oh Holy Father, thou Divine Being, maker of Heaven and earth, we beseech Thee this day to send light unto Thy fellow beings. Keep them, oh Father, in the path of righteousness and virtue. Lead them to know more of Thee and Thy wondrous workings for the redemption of their own souls. We ask for no more but leave all else to Thee."

The tone of Imperator is throughout religious and earnest. In this respect he certainly seems to be identical with the chief guide of Stainton Moses. On one occasion he spoke thus to Prof. Hyslop,—

"We ask thee to think over seriously and earnestly what our teaching really doth mean, and think that

without His will nothing can be. Have charity for thy fellow creature, who hath been less blessed than thyself.

Partake only of the liquid called water in thy world.

We ask thee at the closing of each day to thank Him for His watchfulness over thee.

We desire spiritual growth and perfect health of mind and body.

[Dr. Hodgson asks—Rector, do you mean by water to exclude, for example, tea or coffee or chocolate or mineral waters (hand dissents—no, none of these so called or milk) Dr. Hodgson—But all alcoholic? (*Absolutely*)]

Thou art well developed in a vast number of ways, but in order to carry out the laws of the Supreme Being thou should'st go on and live in the highest possible light, and by so doing thou wilt not only be helping thine own life, but the lives of all God's children.

Keep thy body clothed, fed and thy mind and thoughts in the highest. Let it be thy guide daily, and at the closing of one of thy so-called years come to us and speak of the results.

Care for no mortal other than to help him.

In other words, live in the thought that thou art a part of God and that that part is the man.

The Devil, no doubt, can quote Scripture for his purpose, but all this, I say, is infinitely worse. To have recourse to every possible device in order to delude

men into believing that they are receiving communications from their deceased friends and relatives is as bad as bad can be, but, I know not how to characterise the shocking blasphemy of taking the name of God and affecting to pray to Him for such a purpose. It is useless to try to get out of the difficulty by arguing that the subliminal self being non-moral cannot be the subject of moral judgment. You cannot have it both ways. The subliminal self cannot, at one and the same time, be human or super-human in cleverness, ingenuity and resourcefulness and sub-human in morality in order to suit the exigencies of the telepathic theory. Either the secondary personality is possessed of acute intellect, and, therefore, must be judged by the ordinary moral standard or it is sub-human and non-moral. The former supposition attempts to explain the facts but raises a formidable moral difficulty, the latter supposition avoids the moral difficulty but leaves the phenomena wholly unexplained.

The problem presented by those phenomena is very serious and deserves the earnest consideration of all thinking men. I

especially draw the attention of religious men to it, particularly of those who are not prepared to accept the popular Christian doctrine that there is a personal Devil constantly plotting to compass the ruin of men. I frankly admit that if we accept this doctrine the problem can be solved by supposing that it is the Devil and his followers that personate the dead. But how do those who do not believe in the existence of Satan propose to solve the problem, without believing in spirit return? Easy-going men may be inclined to think that the best way to deal with it is to ignore it. But alas! the hunter is not disposed of because the hare shuts its eyes. The situation, in short, is this: If the mediumistic phenomena are really due to the deception practised by the secondary personality, with which each of us is burdened, why, the occupation of our ministers of religion is gone and the only thing that remains for them to do is to close their meeting-houses and churches and take to the cultivation of the garden. Either the undiscovered country has at last been discovered and from its bourne travellers have

begun to return or this world is veritably the Devil's world and morality and religion, his cruel devices to mock man with false hopes.

For myself, I do not see why we should allow the nightmare of a false theory to oppress us. Telepathy has not a single recommendation in its favour and is in reality a wild and extravagant theory, scarcely deserving to be called a theory at all. The reason why it is popular in some quarters has been forcibly stated by Professor Hyslop.—

“Mr. Balfour has expressed some surprise that telepathy has received so ready an acceptance by the public, as it involves such a revolutionary conception of nature. But I think he entirely misunderstands the point of view from which this public regards it. Mr. Balfour has had to accept it sceptically, but the public not only shows no scepticism about it, but accepts and uses it in the most amazing form without any evidence at all that it is true. The reasons for this are very simple. In the first place the Society for Psychical Research devoted its investigations to these phenomena in lieu of the less respectable phenomena of spiritualism. It began with this phenomenon as a means of limiting or displacing spiritualism, and everywhere associated intelligence and respectability with telepathy, and

while it professed to be seeking for evidence of spirits the intellectual world sneered at such a thing as a spirit. Those who had the respect of the scientific man in mind and who made scepticism a mark of intelligence and respectability soon gave their allegiance to telepathy, not because it was any better an explanation of the facts, but because it received the imprimatur of the scientific man or at least such

the scientific world as was playing with spiritualism and saving its standing by flirting with telepathy. The public was determined to be on the side of respectability, and it cared not for the question whether telepathy was revolutionary or not. It saved the public from the superstition and bad odour of spiritualism, and as aesthetics and respectability are a more powerful influence upon belief than logic or fact, telepathy was a welcome resource for escape from bad company" (*Hibbert Journal* for October, 1910, p. 106).

Let us now turn to the consideration of the hypothesis of spirit communication. Its great recommendation is that it offers a simple and natural explanation of the facts, including mistakes and confusions. Paradoxical as it may sound, the incoherences, mistakes and confusions do not weaken but strengthen the case for spirit communication. For, such mistakes and confusions are bound to occur in the abnormal circumstances under which alone communications can be

made. We do not know what the method of communication is, but it is not unlikely that it is analogous to the manner in which the hypnotiser impresses his ideas and feelings upon the person hypnotised. The communicating spirit may stand to the medium in trance very much in the same relation in which the hypnotiser stands to the hypnotic. The hypnotic patient reproduces the thoughts and feelings of the operator to a certain extent. Spirits may, in a similar manner, impress their ideas on the entranced medium's mind which find expression by means of trance speaking and automatic writing. It is obvious that thoughts communicated in this fashion must often fail to find expression and what *is* expressed must be fragmentary and more or less modified by the subconscious ideas of the medium's own mind. Is it any wonder, then, that plenty of errors and incoherences occur even in communications which, on the whole, are clear and intelligible? If we are to believe the spirits themselves it is by no means an easy thing for them to send messages. They say that proximity to the "light," as they call the

medium, gradually produces a bewildering effect on their own minds, so much so that towards the end of a prolonged communication they tend to lapse into something like a comatose condition. Speaking of the difficulty of communication, G. P. says.—

“Remember we share and always shall have our friends in the dream life *i.e.*, your life so to speak, which will attract us for ever and ever, and so long as we have any friends *sleeping* in the material world ;—you to us are more like as we understand sleep, you look shut up as one in prison, and in order for us to get into communication with you, we have to enter into your sphere, as one like yourself asleep. This is just why we make mistakes as you call them, or get confused and muddled, so to put it, H. (Dr. Hodgson repeats in his own language) Your thoughts do grasp mine. Well now you have just what I have been wanting to come and make clear to you, H., old fellow. (It is quite clear) yes, you see I am more awake than asleep, yet I cannot come just as I am in reality, independently of the medium's light. (You come much better than the others) yes because I am a little nearer and not less intelligent than some others here. ** I am not less intelligent now. But there are many difficulties. I am far clearer on all points than I was shut up in the prisoned body (Prisoned ? Prisoning or imprisoning you ought to say) No. I don't mean to get it that way you spoke—perhaps I have spelled it wrong. “Don't view me with a critic's eye, but pass

my imperfections by." Of course, I know all that as well as any body on your sphere. (Of course) well I think so. I tell you, old fellow, it don't do to pick all these little errors too much when they amount to nothing in one way. You have light enough and brain enough I know to understand my explanations of being shut up in this body dreaming as it were and trying to help on science."

Frederic Myers, in his communications through Mrs. Holland, says the same thing,—

"The nearest simile I can find to express the difficulties of sending a message is that I appear to be standing behind a sheet of frosted glass which blurs sight and deadens sound—dictating feebly to a reluctant and somewhat obtuse secretary. A feeling of terrible impotence burdens me, I am so powerless to tell what means so much. I cannot get into communication with those who would understand and believe me. * * I have thought of a simile which may help you to realise the bound to earth condition which persists with me. It is a matter very largely of voluntary choice. I am, as it were, actuated by the missionary spirit and the great longing to speak to the souls in prison—still in the prison of the flesh—leads me to 'absent me from felicity awhile' ". (*Proceedings S. P. R. Vol. XXI, pp. 208, 213*).

When we take all this into consideration the wonder is not that mistakes are made but that the spirits manage so often to send clear and coherent messages. Dr. Hodgson

well expresses the enormous difficulties with which spirits may have to contend in order to communicate,—

“Let the reader start to hold a conversation with two or three friends, but let him be forced to spell out his words instead of speaking them in the ordinary way, and be absolutely confined to this method of expressing himself, no matter what his friends may do or say. Let him be interrupted at every two or three words by his interlocutors, who tell him that they don't catch the last word, and ask for it to be repeated. Let them further frequently interrupt him by asking fresh questions before his answer to a previous question is completed. Further let him suppose that it is very difficult for him to hear precisely what their questions are, so that he hears only portions of what they say. Having made this experiment, let him then suppose further that instead of using his own voice to spell his words with, he is placed in one side of a machine so constructed that the thoughts running in his mind have a tendency to be registered in writing on the other side of the machine, not as fast as he thinks them, but at the rate of writing, and that it is only by reading this writing that his interlocutors know what he has to tell them. Let him suppose, further, that one or more other persons are standing near him on his side of the machine and talking to him or to one another within his hearing, so that the words which they say tend to be registered in the writing; and let him further suppose that he

is unfamiliar with the machine, and that the writing produced has a tendency to vary somewhat from the words actually thought of by him, owing to imperfections in the machine. Let him further suppose that the part of the machine in which he is placed is filled with a more or less suffocating gas which produces a partial loss of consciousness, that sometimes this gas is much more poisonous than usual (weakness or ill health of medium) and that its effects are usually cumulative while he remains in the machine."

The foregoing considerations partially explain why the messages of spirits are often trivial and unimportant. Much is made of this by a certain class of critics. Referring to the communications of Frederic Myers, a writer in a popular illustrated magazine asks—

"Why having succeeded in getting into touch with his friends on earth, did he not attempt to tell them something of his present state, its conditions, his own feelings—anything, in fact, rather than pointless and unnecessary chatter."

Now, in the first place, it is *not* true that all the communications are trivial. A false impression is apt to be created in the minds of the readers of the Proceedings of the Society for Psychical Research. In these Proceedings only evidential matter is print-

ed and this must necessarily consist of particular and trivial incidents capable of being verified. Statements about the spirit's "present state, its conditions," &c. are for the most part *not printed*, because they are not evidential. Prof. Hyslop, says:—

"There has been, a great deal of matter in the communications that is not trivial in any sense of the term, but owing to the nature of the problem, which demands evidential phenomena, we have been obliged to publish those records which contain the largest amount of detailed and trivial incidents, as necessary to the proof of the supernormal and then of the identity of discarnate spirits. No stress has been placed on matter and sentiments that are not trivial as they are often non evidential."

Apart from this, messages, owing to the conditions under which they are sent, are, as a rule, bound to be somewhat commonplace. Let a critic like the writer to whom I have referred first frame and write down a message of some complexity and then impress it with all the emphasis at his command on the mind of a somewhat idiotic person and direct that person to convey the message to a friend. Let the person receiving the message take it down exactly as he gets it. Then let the sender

of the message compare what was sent with what was received and he may begin to sympathise with the spirits who are harshly judged for not transmitting across the boundary that separates their world from ours the wisdom of Socrates, the Philosophy of Aristotle or the poetry of Shakespeare.

There is, however, a conclusive reason for the triviality of the messages. Nothing else will prove identity. To press the spirits to prove their identity and then to find fault with them for communicating what alone will serve this purpose on the score of their triviality is, to say the least, extremely unreasonable. Imagine a man to return to his country after long years of exile. As soon as he sets foot on his native land, he wires home that he is soon to meet his relatives. The relatives are sceptical and wire back to him asking him to give some proof of his identity. How will he satisfy his doubting relatives over the wire? By giving a graphic description of his place of exile or by mentioning petty and private incidents connected with his life which his relatives

will at once recognise? To determine what sorts of things spontaneously occur to a man when he is suddenly called upon to furnish a proof of his identity, Professor Hyslop made a series of valuable experiments in Columbia University. I quote his shorter account of the results of these experiments,—

“If any one will stop long enough to think and to ask what incidents he would choose to prove his identity over a telephone or telegraph wire he will readily discover that his spontaneous choice would be the most trivial incidents possible. With this in view, and knowing that human nature would select such incidents, I arranged a series of experiments over a telegraph line between two of the buildings at Columbia University. I had my operators there and brought two acquaintances, one to one end of the wire and the other to the opposite end. *A* of course, was to know that *B* was present at the other end, but *B* did not know that *A* was present. *A* was to send messages to *B* without giving his name until *B* discovered his presence and identity or gave it up. I said nothing to any one about the primary object of my experiments, which was to ascertain experimental evidence on the question whether men would choose trivial incidents to prove their identity. The sequel was that these persons, students and professors in the University, uniformly chose even more trivial incidents than we generally get through Mrs. Piper for the

same apparent purpose. In fact, if we judge from the intellectual character of the communication over the wire, we could not distinguish Columbia University professors and students from boot-blacks or street gamins."

Lastly, we must remember that much of the triviality may also be due to the limitations of the communicators. Are we in this life always treated to sublime discourses even in our conversations with gifted men around us or, for the matter of that, would life be worth living if such a misfortune befell us? What right have we to expect that spirits should talk nothing but sublime philosophy? It is certain that many of them have not the capacity for it even if they had the will. Fools and knaves are not likely to be forthwith transformed into saints and philosophers by the mere fact of dying.

We thus see that on the spiritistic hypothesis the triviality of the messages is inevitable. But what can be the excuse for them on the telepathic hypothesis? An omniscient faculty which has access to the minds and memories of all living persons ought to be equal to the task of composing

learned treatises. Why does not Mrs. Piper's secondary personality personate Darwin and Green, for instance, and produce scientific and philosophical essays worthy of them, gathering materials for this purpose from the minds of Dr. Wallace and Mr. Bradley ?

As to the objection that spirits do not tell us much about their present state and its conditions, the critics do not seem to consider whether the experiences of beings of one order can be communicated to beings of another order. It must be as impossible for spirits to tell us what their world is like, what they do, how they live, and so forth as it is for the seeing man to convey his notions of colour to those who are born blind or for a full grown individual to explain his conception of the brotherhood of man to a child five years old. The spirits themselves say that it is beyond their power to make their mode of existence intelligible to us and all that they can do is to convey to our minds *symbolically* some vague notions of their world. Every intelligent person ought to see that this must necessarily be the case. Mutual

intercourse is possible only on the basis of common experience. Spirits, therefore, can talk to us only about their *earthly* life and about things which *our* modes of thought and experience enable us to comprehend. Let a fastidious critic succeed in making the deaf and dumb appreciate music before he demands great things from spirits. "Notwithstanding the communion between the two order of spirits," observes Kant, "it is impossible that those ideas which are received by the embodied spirit, as a being dependent upon the material world, should pass without change into the minds of purely immaterial beings, or that the thoughts of immaterial beings should without losing their peculiar character, pass over into the consciousness of men; for the contents of those different kinds of consciousness are specifically distinct." I wish that this sound observation were appreciated not only by sceptical critics but also by a very different class of men, namely, the good people whose minds are overweighted with esoteric lore and who are equal to the task of writing histories and geographies of the other world.

But what need is there for impatience and a premature desire to learn secrets which a wise Providence has, perhaps, for our own good withheld from us? The duties of life are many and arduous and to think of aught else but their due performance as long as we are here is perchance not what the Supreme arbiter of our destinies desires of us. It is enough that we are permitted to know that beyond death there is a fuller life. For the rest, we may well be content to believe that a just and merciful Providence will ultimately call us to a station for which we fit ourselves by our own deeds. Toil faithfully and steadily in the Lord's vineyard, deserve, not by your sayings but by your doings, promotion to a better world and then when the end comes,

Welcome the hour that bids thee lie
 In anguish of thy last infirmity!
 Welcome the toss for ease, the gasp for air
 The visage drawn, and Hippocratic stare!
 Welcome the darkening dream, the lost control,
 The sleep, the swoon, the arousal of the soul !*

* Lines composed by F. W. H. Myers.

V.

Mr. Myers died at Rome on January 17, 1901 and Dr. Hodgson in December, 1905. These eminent men had devoted their lives to a work which Mr. Gladstone truly described as by far the most important that is being done in the world. Mr. Myers's name is well known in the world of letters. He certainly would have acquired much greater distinction as a literary man if circumstances had not made him a seeker after truth in a different sphere. And without the patience and self-sacrifice of Dr. Hodgson the phenomena of Mrs. Piper would scarcely have been investigated with the same thoroughness and care. Both Mr. Myers and Dr. Hodgson were intimately acquainted with the difficulties of Psychical Research and knew perfectly well what kind of evidence is needed to circumvent telepathy and prove spirit return. If spirit communication really takes place, would it not be strange if Mr. Myers and Dr. Hodgson, who had laboured so much to find out the truth about it, failed to help forward their life's work from the other side? Was it not

to be expected that they should endeavour, if possible, to supply such proofs as would meet the objections of sceptics, if not of scoffers? What was to be expected did actually happen. Soon after Mr. Myers's death a new method of supplying evidence of survival after death was apparently adopted on the other side—a method which had not occurred to any of the workers on this side and was detected by them only in the course of a minute study of the records. The new plan was to send a message through several automatists at a distance from each other and sometimes unknown to each other and who at first did not even know that any correspondence was going on.

Sir Oliver Lodge says,—

“ In many cases, the messages as separately obtained were quite unintelligible, and only exhibited a meaning when they were subsequently put together by another person. So that the content of the message was in no living mind until the correspondences were detected by laborious criticism a year or two later; then at last the several parts were unified and the whole message and intention made out.”

These messages are often full of literary

allusions. To quote Sir Oliver Lodge again,—

“Whatever else they are they are eminently communications from a man of letters, to be interpreted by scholars, and they are full of obscure classical allusions. And parenthetically I may here state, as a noteworthy fact, that now-a-days even through Mrs. Piper such scholarly allusions are obtained—not obvious and elementary ones, but such as exhibit a range of reading far beyond that of ordinary people—beyond my own for instance—and beyond that of any one present at the time.”

This new method has been named cross correspondence. Any one who wishes to understand the full significance of it must carefully study the reports on the subject by Mrs. Verrall, Miss Alice Johnson and Mr. Piddington. They are so full of literary and classical allusions that it is by no means an easy task to understand them. In this paper I will describe only a few typical cases. Some of the best of them are so long—each occupying more than a dozen closely printed pages of the Proceedings of the Society, that it is impossible to condense them intelligibly.

The automatists through whom cross correspondences have been received are Mrs.

Verrall, an eminent classical scholar and a lecturer at Newnham College; her daughter, Miss Helen Verrall, Mrs. Thompson, Mrs. Forbes (Pseudonym), Mrs. Holland (Pseudonym), an Anglo-Indian lady in India apparently belonging to the higher circles of her community and Mrs. Piper. It fell to the lot of Miss Johnson and Mr. Piddington to collate and study the records.

"In studying these in proof in the early part of 1906," writes Miss Johnson, "I was struck by the fact that in some of the most remarkable instances the statements in the script of one writer were by no means a simple reproduction of statements in the script of the other, but seemed to represent different aspects of the same idea, one supplementing or completing the other. * * What we get is a fragmentary utterance in one script, which seems to have no particular point or meaning, and another fragmentary utterance in the other, of an equally pointless character; but when we put the two together, we see that they supplement one another, and that there is apparently one coherent idea underlying both, but only partially expressed in each. * * It appears that this method is directed towards satisfying our evidential requirements. Granted the possibility of communication, it may be supposed that within the last few years a certain group of persons have been trying to communicate

with us, who are sufficiently well-instructed to know all the objections that reasonable sceptics have urged against the previous evidence, and sufficiently intelligent to realise to the full all the force of these objections.* It may be supposed that those persons have invented a new plan—the plan of cross correspondences—to meet the sceptic's objections. ** It was not the automatists that detected it, but a student of the scripts ; it has every appearance of being an element imported from outside. It suggests an independent invention, an active intelligence constantly at work in the present." (*Proceedings S. P. R. Vol. xxi pp. 375—77*).

I give below a few of these cases of cross correspondence.

On March 23, 1902, Mrs. Verrall received a note from Mrs. Forbes asking whether a certain word had any special significance for her. Mrs. Verrall replied that if the word came in a particular connection, it might have a very great significance. On March 26, she received from Mrs. Forbes the automatic message which had led her to make the inquiry and Mrs. Verrall found that it did purport to represent what the

* Miss Johnson herself is sceptically inclined, as might be expected of one who is thoroughly imbued with the spirit of the Sidgwick's.

word had suggested to her. In the automatic writing of Mrs. Forbes, the name of the alleged controlling spirit with whom the word was associated in Mrs. Verrall's mind was first written and then the word without any context. Next came a message from the deceased son of Mrs. Forbes, Talbot Forbes, stating that the control wanted her "to try for a test with our friend at Cambridge (Mrs. Verrall). Write to Mrs. Verrall today. One word will be enough." Then in large letters the word in question was written. "The significance of the word for me," writes Mrs. Verrall, "could not have been known to Mrs. Forbes and accordingly the incident made a great impression on me."

Mrs. Forbes's only son, Talbot Forbes (Pseudonym) was a military officer who died in the Boer War. It was after his death that Mrs. Forbes developed the power of automatic writing and received by this means many communications from her son. On August 28, 1901, probably early in the morning, Mrs. Forbes received a message from her son to the effect that he was looking for a medium who wrote automatically

in order that he might obtain corroboration for her own writing and he ended by saying that he must now leave her in order to join Edmund Gurney* in controlling the sensitive. On the same day at 10-30 P.M. Mrs. Verrall wrote,—

“Sign with the seal. The fir tree that has already been planted in the garden gives its own portent.”

This writing was signed with a scrawl and three drawings representing a sword, a suspended bugle and a pair of scissors. A suspended bugle surmounted by a crown is the badge of the regiment to which Talbot Forbes belonged. The significance of the message, “the fir tree that has already been planted in the garden gives its own portent” will appear from the fact that in Mrs. Forbes’s garden there are four or five small fir trees grown from seed sent to her by her son. These facts were entirely unknown to Mrs. Verrall. The object of the communicator in using this expression was evidently to indicate the connection

* Edmund Gurney who, during his lifetime, was intimately associated with Mr. Myers in Psychological Research is represented in the messages as cooperating with his old friend in the work on the other side.

between Mrs. Verrall's script and that of Mrs. Forbes. This cross correspondence was discovered three months after the date of its occurrence when Mrs. Forbes stayed with Mrs. Verrall for one night.

Sir Oliver Lodge writes,—

"In another case, October 16th, 1904, Mrs. Verrall's script gave details, afterwards verified, of what Mrs. Forbes was doing, and immediately afterwards Mrs. Verrall had a mental impression of Mrs. Forbes sitting in her drawing-room, with the figure of her son standing looking at her. Mrs. Forbes's script of the same day, purporting to come from her son, stated that he was present and wished she could see him, and that a test was being given for her at Cambridge."

On March 2, 1906, Mrs. Verrall wrote,—
(*In Latin*) "Not with such help will you find what you want; not with such help, nor with those defenders of yours." These words, quoted from the *Aeneid*, are used by Hecuba when she sees old Priam getting ready to defend Troy against the victorious Greeks. Then the following passage follows in English,—

"Keep the two distinct—you do not hear write

regularly—give up other things." Then again in Latin. "First among his peers, himself not unmindful of his name; with him a brother related in feeling, though not in blood. Both these will send a word to you, through another woman. After some days you will easily understand what I say; till then farewell."

(March 4, 1906) "Pagan and Pope. The stoic persecutor and the Christian. Gregory not Basils' friend ought to be a clue but you have it not quite right."

"Pagan and Pope and Reformer all enemies as you think." (*In Latin*). "The cross has a meaning. The cross bearer who one day is borne."

"The standard bearer is the link."

(March 5, 1906) "The club-bearer [or key-bearer] with the lion's skin already well described before this in the writings. Some things are to be corrected. Ask your husband he knows it well."

Mrs. Verrall understood nothing of all this, except the reference to the *Aeneid*—the vain defence of Troy against the Greeks in the opening line. Her husband Dr. A. W. Verrall, however, to whom she showed the script of March 2, said that he could conjecture what the communicator was aiming at, but did not tell her what it was. When Dr. Verrall saw the script of March 4, he was more certain of the

correctness of his interpretation of it. Mrs. Verrall, however, still understood nothing. It will be observed that it is plainly stated in the sentence, "both these will send a word to you through another woman" that a clue to the interpretation of the message will be given through another medium. Such a clue was actually given in Mrs. Holland's script of March 7, a copy of which Mrs. Verrall received from Miss Johnson on March 11. I will quote it presently. Mrs. Holland was at that time in England. Mrs. Holland's script left no doubt in Dr. Verrall's mind that the interpretation put by him upon the message was correct. He then told Mrs. Verrall what he understood the communicator to convey. The object was to describe Raphael's picture of Attila terrified by the vision of St. Peter and St. Paul when meeting Pope Leo, who went out to save Rome. Miss Johnson writes,—

"The picture is the well known one in the Stanza d'Eliodoro in the Vatican. The Pope sits on a white palfrey, a cross-bearer riding on his left and Cardinals on his right. Attila on a black horse is in the middle of the picture, with a standard bearer in the background on his right and a group of mounted Huns

beyond. St. Peter and St. Paul are descending from the sky, both bearing swords, and St. Peter also holding a large key or keys in his left hand. In the back-ground is seen the City of Rome, with the coliseum and aqueducts.

This picture was, of course, known to Mrs. Verrall, but, she writes, had certainly not been recalled to her mind, consciously at least, by her script."

Regarding the interpretation of Mrs. Verrall's script, Miss Johnson says,—

"The reference to Troy in the first part of the script introduces the idea of the defence of a City against an invading host; Hecuba points out to Priam the inadequacy of his material weapons in the defence of Troy. Leo, on the other hand, opposed Attila with moral or spiritual weapons of defence, which saved the new Troy—Rome.

"First among his peers" is a phrase often applied to the Pope.

"With him a brother related in feeling though not in blood." Taking the Pope in this case to be St. Peter, the brother would be St. Paul, or the two brothers in feeling might be the Pope and St. Peter.

"Pagan and Pope" appropriate to Attila and Leo.

"The stoic persecutor and the Christian—Gregory not Basil's friend ought to be a clue." This is all very dubious. No satisfactory interpretation of the "stoic persecutor and the Christian" has been suggested.

"Gregory not Basils' friend," may mean, not Gregory Nazarien. Perhaps the Gregory meant

is Gregory the Great, the Pope to whom the phrase 'primus inter pares' seems for historical reasons specially appropriate. There is, however, a mistake somewhere,—possibly in the introduction of the stoic persecutor,—for the Script says, "You have it not quite right" and it goes on in large and emphatic writing, as if with a struggle to correct itself.

"Pagan and Pope and Reformer—all enemies as you think"—that is, as I interpret, you might naturally suppose that the three types would be all hostile to one another; but in this case the Pope and Reformer, namely, Leo (or St. Peter) and St. Paul, are combined against the Pagan Attila.

"The cross-bearer who one day is borne" may have a double reference, to the cross-bearer in the picture and to the legend of St. Paul's martyrdom.

"The standard bearer is the link" may refer to Attila's standard bearer, who may be called a link in the sense that he furnishes one more thread of connection between the script and the picture,—in particular because he suggests Attila himself, who hitherto has been less specifically described than the other important personages, being merely called the Pagan."

In the light of this interpretation, the reader should study Mrs. Verrall's script again.

It will be seen that the picture is described very indirectly and allusively. Particular care is taken to make the meaning

not too obvious and yet sufficiently definite to leave no room for doubt as to the interpretation if a further material hint was given. Exactly such a hint was given in Mrs. Holland's script of March 7, which is as follows,—

"Ave Roma Immortalis (Hail, immortal Rome). How could I make it any clearer without giving her the clue? How cold it was that winter—even snow in Rome."

Several features of the picture are absent from the description of it in Mrs. Verrall's script. No mention is made of the central idea of it—the miraculous deliverance of the Holy City of Rome from Attila and his barbarian horde. The reason for this omission is distinctly stated in Mrs. Holland's script in the passage, "How could I make it any clearer without giving her the clue?" The omission is now supplied in the phrase, "Ave Roma immortalis." In Mrs. Verrall's script, the passage "Both these will send you a word through another woman," means that a clue to the interpretation of the message will be given elsewhere. The two automatists were, of course, quite ignorant of each

other's writings and the cross correspondence was discovered long after it was produced. It is quite clear that the communicator intended to divide the whole message into two parts, each incomplete and unintelligible by itself and to transmit them through two different automatists at a distance from each other for the purpose of proving that a single designing mind was behind the whole affair. It only remains to add that snow actually fell in Rome in January 1901, the month in which Mr. Myers died there.

Mr. Myers was intimately acquainted with the Verrall's. It was after his death that Mrs. Verrall developed the faculty of automatic writing and by this means received what purported to be messages from Myers which seemed to her to be very striking. Towards the end of 1906, Mrs. Piper came again to England and the council of the Society for Psychical Research decided that the main object of the experiments to be conducted with her should be to bring about the kind of phenomena to which the name of cross correspondence

has been given. Myers communicating through Mrs. Piper gave proof of his knowledge of unpublished portions of Mrs. Verrall's script purporting to be inspired by the same personality.* Thus, for instance, on January 15, Myers P. claimed that he had given Mrs. Verrall a message about "celestial halcyon days." Mrs. Verrall, however, could not remember that any such phrase had occurred in her writings. In her script of January 22, a clue to the discovery of the phrase was given and following it Mrs. Verrall found that the *idea* conveyed by the phrase though not the phrase itself did really occur in one of her scripts of a much earlier period. At the sitting with Mrs. Piper on January 30, 1907, Mrs. Verrall said to Myers P. "You said you had spoken to me of celestial halcyon days. I couldn't remember it, but I have found it now." Thereupon Myers P. answered, "I told you, my dear friend, that my memory was better than yours on some points." Mrs. Verrall—"Yes, so I have found."

* In what follows Myers V. means Myers communicating through Mrs. Verrall and Myers P. Myers communicating through Mrs. Piper.

All this led Mrs. Verrall to decide to ask a test question which Myers P., if this personality was really Frederic Myers, should be able to answer. To make the experiment crucial, it was decided that the question should conform to the following conditions,—

“The question should be unintelligible to Mrs. Piper herself, in order to prevent the medium’s own knowledge from affecting the result.

The question should be short on account of the difficulty and slowness of communication between sitter and communicator in the present conditions of the Piper trance.

The question should concern a subject which had not only been known to but which had been thoroughly familiar to Frederic Myers, so that, had it been addressed to him in his lifetime, he would have answered it instinctively, without a moment’s doubt, hesitation or reflection. It should, therefore, concern a matter not merely of intellectual acquisition or learning, but of knowledge so completely assimilated as to have been a stable part of his personality.

The answer should be complex, though not necessarily lengthy; and in order to avoid the risk of an accidentally successful guess on the part of Mrs. Piper, it should require for completeness allusions to more than one group of associations.

The answer should be such as could be proved to have been known to Myers; that is, the verification

should not depend on Mrs. Verrall's personal knowledge or impression but on unmistakable external evidence."

It was not easy to find a suitable question fulfilling all these conditions. On January 23, it occurred to Mrs. Verrall that the Greek words *Autos*, *Ouranos*, *Akumon* (and the very Heaven waveless) would serve the purpose. They are taken from the Fifth Book of the *Aenides* of the Neo-Platonic philosopher Plotinus and occur in a passage in which Plotinus describes the conditions necessary for ecstasy or the communion of the individual soul with the Divine, which, according to him, are perfect calm of soul and body and of external nature also. A translation of this passage is given in the second volume of Frederic Myers's *Human Personality and its Survival of Bodily Death*, but the Greek words themselves are not given and no stress is laid on them in the translation. The Greek words, without any translation, followed by the name of Plotinus, form the motto to a poem on Tennyson by Frederic Myers in which there is an allusion to Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar*. In the event,

then, of a complete answer to the question being given, the following things were to be expected.

“A translation into English of the words *Autos, Ouranos, Akumon*.

A reference to Myers's poem on Tennyson.

A reference to Plotinus and the latter part of *Human Personality*.”

Mrs. Verrall put the question to Myers at the Piper sitting of January 29. Addressing Myers she said, “I want you to do something if possible. I do not want you to write Greek because the light (*i.e.* Mrs. Piper) does not know Greek, but if I say three Greek words, could you say what they remind you of?” Myers P. answered, “I might grasp the words and I might not, but I could try.” Mrs. V.—“If I speak them now, you can tell me now or later what they remind you of.” After January 30, the day following that on which the question was asked, Mrs. Verrall did not attend any Piper sitting until April 29, nor had any information as to what was happening at these sittings except what was communicated to her for the purposes of the experiment. The sittings with Mrs. Piper

were mainly conducted by Mr. Piddington, Miss Johnson and Mrs. Sidgwick occasionally assisting. Mr. Piddington knew absolutely nothing of the associations of the Greek words except the bare translation and kept no information of what was being written by Myers V. during the period of his sittings with Mrs. Piper.

At the sitting of January 30, attended by Mrs. Verrall, it seemed as if the communicating intelligence had in his mind the associations of the Greek text and in the trance utterances of Mrs. Piper there appeared to be a "preliminary emergence" of them. Towards the end of the sitting and as she was coming out of the trance, Mrs. Piper disconnectedly uttered the words "larches" and "laburnum". These words occur in the following lines of Tennyson's *In Memoriam*—"When rosy plumelets tuft the larch" and "Laburnums dropping wells of fire."

On February 25, Myers V. referred to lines of Tennyson suggestive of a heavenly calm,—*"I stretch my hand across the vapourous space, the interlunar space—'twixt moon and earth—where the Gods of*

Lucretius quaff their nectar. Do you understand?

"The lucid interspace of world and world—well that is bridged by the thought of a friend, bridged before for your passage, but today for the passage of any that will walk it, not in hope but in faith." The allusion is to the *Lucretius* of Tennyson, to a passage which describes calm contemplation.

"The Gods, who haunt

The lucid insterspace of world and world &c.,"

On February 26, Myers V. wrote, "*Autos, Ouranos Akumon*. I think I have made him (probably Rector) understand that the best reference to it will be made elsewhere not Mrs. Piper at all. I think I have got some words from the poem written down—if not stars and satellites, another phrase will do as well. And may there be no moaning at the bar—my pilot face to face."

"The last poems of Tennyson and Browning should be compared. There are references in her writing to both—Helen's I mean."

"The fighter fights one last fight, but there is peace for him too in the end—and peace for the seer who knew that after the earth-

quake and the fire and the wind, after, after, in the stillness comes the voice that can be heard."

Mrs. Verrall came to learn that in the script of her daughter, Miss Helen Verrall, who is an automatic writer, there had been a quotation from Browning's *Asolando*. The allusion in the seer who knew &c., is to Elijah's communion with God in the calm that followed upon "the great and strong winds" and the "earthquake and the fire."

It will be observed that in these scripts Myers V. refers to Tennyson's *In Memoriam* and *Crossing the Bar* (And may there be no moaning at the bar—my pilot face to face). The reference to *Crossing the Bar* is pertinent as that is the poem which forms the subject matter of Frederic Myers's poem on Tennyson to which the Greek words are the motto. One association of the words is thus plainly indicated. But the communicating intelligence continued to emphasise the idea of calm and alluded to *In Memoriam* more than once. The significance of this was not at all understood by the experimenters at first. The reference to *In Memoriam* and the association of Tennyson

with Elijah's communion with the unseen in the calm which followed "the earthquake and the fire and the wind" suggests that what the communicating intelligence seeks to convey is a connection between *In Memoriam* and external calm which is the condition of ecstasy. That this is the intention of the communicator is further indicated by Mrs. Verrall's script of March 6,—"I have tried to tell him of the calm, the heavenly and earthly calm but I do not think it is clear. I think you would understand if you could see the record (the record of a Piper sitting, that is to say). Tell me what you have understood. Calm is the sea—and in my heart if calm at all, if any calm, a calm despair. That is only part of the answer—just as it is not the final thought. The symphony does not close upon despair—but on harmony. So does the poem. Wait for the last word." "This script," observes Mr. Piddington, "definitely said that an attempt had been made to tell him (either 'Rector' or Mr. Piddington, in charge of the Piper sittings) of the 'heavenly and earthly calm' and that this would be recognised

by Mrs. Verrall when she saw the record—the record, that is, of a Piper sitting. Then by means of a textual quotation; ‘And in my heart, if calm at all, if any calm, a calm’ despair,’ reference was made to the ‘calm of despair’ of an early section of *In Memoriam* (xi) with the comment that this was not the final thought of the poem. To say that the ‘calm of despair’ of *In Memoriam* was not the final thought is to imply that in the poem is another calm, *not* of despair, which is the final thought.”

In the meanwhile interesting things were happening at the Piper sittings of which Mrs. Verrall as yet knew nothing.

On March 6, Myers P. wrote three words as follows,—

Cloudless

Sky

Horizon

followed by the phrase “a cloudless sky beyond the horizon.” Mrs. Piper, as she was coming out of the trance, uttered the words “moaning at the bar when I put out to sea,” “Arthur Hallam”* “Arthur Hallam, Good bye. Margaret.” Margaret is Mrs.

* The hero of *In Memoriam*.

Verrall's Christian name. "A cloudless sky beyond the horizon" is a very good paraphrase of the Greek words, though not a literal translation. "This paraphrase," says Mr. Piddington, "seems to indicate knowledge not only of the meaning of the three words of the test question but also of their original context." Besides, it looks as though the communicator purposely avoided a literal translation, which was the only thing about the question known to Mr. Piddington, in order to avoid the suspicion of telepathy. *Crossing the Bar* and *In Memoriam* are alluded to and the word "Margaret" indicates that all this has already been communicated to Mrs. Verrall which, as the reader will see, is correct.

On March 13, Myers P. said, "I saw Mrs. Verrall and gave her a sign like this (draws a bar) and said I have crossed it." Mr. Piddington, who was quite ignorant of what Mrs. Verrall was writing, asked what the drawing meant and in reply the word, bar, was written in capital letters. Myers P. added, "I thought she might get a glimpse of my understanding of her Greek." Then Hodgson, who is represented as

cooperating with Myers in these experiments, appeared and asked whether Mrs. Verrall had drawn a bar. It will be remembered that in Mrs. Verrall's script written before this, lines from *Crossing the Bar*, were quoted, though no bar was drawn.

In all this, it is clear that the association of *Autos*, *Ouranos*, *Akumon* with Myers's poem on Tennyson's *Crossing the Bar* is plainly indicated. This was one of the associations of the words which Mrs. Verrall expected to get. But what puzzled her was the reference to *In Memoriam* and the repeated attempts to connect that poem with the idea of calm. Sentences like "I have tried to tell him of the calm, the heavenly and earthly calm," the allusion to *Lucretius* and the mention of Tennyson's name in the script of March 11, containing phrases about "unseen or half-seen companionship," "voiceless communing and unseen presence felt", suggested to Mrs. Verrall's mind that there might be definite statements in *In Memoriam* about spiritual communion under the condition of external calm. She, therefore, read that poem in

order to see whether her conjecture was correct. She had read *In Memoriam* in the days of her girlhood, when she was quite ignorant of Greek, she had never made a minute study of it, had read no commentary on it and had not read any life of Tennyson. On re-reading the poem she was struck with the great resemblance between the conditions of the poet's own trance described in sections XCIV-V and the conditions of ecstasy postulated by Plotinus in the passage from which the Greek words are quoted. Further investigation showed that though some commentators of Tennyson have noticed the similarity between the poet's trance and that of the philosopher none had pointed out that the same condition of communion with the unseen, *viz.*, external calm, is required by both and that the language of Tennyson is very similar to that of Plotinus. Mrs. Verrall thus made an important discovery which she recorded in a paper published in the *Modern Language Review* for July, 1907. The reference to Arthur Hallam and *Crossing the Bar* in Mrs. Piper's trance, I may mention here, had occurred before Mrs. Verrall

understood the significance of the quotations from Tennyson in her own script; so there can be no question of telepathy from her mind to Mrs. Piper's.

One of the answers to the test question, it will thus be seen, was much more complete than any of the experimenters on this side could anticipate. Not only was the association of the Greek words with Myers's poem on Tennyson indicated but *the reason why these words were chosen as the motto for it was given*. Mrs. Verrall's own notion was that the motto was an allusion to the fulfilment of the poets' desire that there might be no moaning at the bar when he put out to sea. It so happened that Tennyson died on a day characterised by perfect atmospheric calm.

"It is specially to be noted," observes Mr. Piddington, "that the associations of the words with Tennyson, and in particular with the two poems *In Memoriam* and *Crossing the Bar*, were mentioned in the trance to J. G. P. (Mr. Piddington, who speaks of himself in the third person) who had no knowledge whatsoever as to the authorship or context of those

words, or of their associations with either Tennyson or Plotinus. Again whereas Mrs. Verrall's own associations of the phrase with Tennyson referred to Myers's poem on Tennyson which contains an allusion to *Crossing the Bar* but none to *In Memoriam*, the references in her own script were to *In Memoriam* as well as to *Crossing the Bar*, and those in the trance (Mrs. Piper's) were to Arthur Hallam as well as to *Crossing the Bar*. Thus knowledge was shown in the Piper sittings of facts altogether outside Mrs. Piper's own range of interest or knowledge and those facts were all unknown to the actual sitter, J. G. P., and had been in part unknown to Mrs. Verrall when she first put the question and were not, at least consciously, known to her until March 12."

"To Frederic Myers all the main facts given in the scripts of Mrs. Piper and Mrs. Verrall had been known: the meaning of the words, the associations with Plotinus and *Human Personality*, and the associations with his own poems on Tennyson and with *Crossing the Bar*."

It is practically certain that Frederic

Myers knew the similarity discovered by Mrs. Verrall. He was a profound classical scholar intimately acquainted with the writings of Plotinus and other mystics. He was an ardent admirer of Tennyson, "than whom," he writes in a letter to his son, "a greater man I have never looked and shall never look upon"—and the trances of the poet were a subject in which he was deeply interested. There is no aspect of the mystical and supernatural to which Frederic Myers's attention was not directed.

So far two of the answers to the question were given, *viz.* a paraphrase of the Greek words and their association with Myers's poem on Tennyson containing a reference to *Crossing the Bar*. So much was expected by Mrs. Verrall. But what was *not* expected and not known to her was also given, *viz.*, the reason for the choice of these words as a motto. References to *Crossing the Bar* and *In Memoriam* occur both in the scripts of Mrs. Verrall and Mrs. Piper but the paraphrase of the Greek words is given *only through Mrs. Piper*. This is a circumstance of great importance. Apparently the communicating intelligence is a trained

experimenter, "as anxious as Mr. Podmore himself to eliminate thought transference," who knows very well that if the translation were done through Mrs. Verrall, hostile critics would at once argue that it is the work of Mrs. Verrall's subliminal self, she being a classical scholar. The paraphrase, it would seem, was deliberately given through Mrs. Piper, who does not know a word of Greek.

After March 13, Mrs. Sidgwick took over charge of the sittings with Mrs. Piper. Up to April 24, no further progress was made in answering the question. Mrs. Verrall, therefore, attended the sitting on April 29 and reminded Myers P. that though the question had been partly answered, all the associations of the Greek words had not yet been given. This was her first attendance at a Piper sitting after the question was put. Particular care was taken not to give the communicating intelligence any hint as to which statements by him in her own scripts or in those of Mrs. Piper had led her to conclude that her question had been understood and partly answered. In the course of this sitting the names of Swedenborg, St. Paul and Dante were

mentioned in an apparently purposeless manner.

At the sitting of April 30, 1907, Miss Johnson was at first present alone. Rector said, We greet you as a new friend in a way, and before the lady (*i.e.*, Mrs. Verrall) appears Mr. Myers would like to speak to you. Miss J.—I shall be very glad to see Mr. Myers. (Myers communicating), Yes, good morning, my friend, how are you? I am very glad to see you. Yes I promised to give my reply to the Greek words and as soon as I saw the light departing I caught Rector and gave it to him and he will now give it to you.

Miss J.—Yes, do please.

Myers P.—I believe it will be a better proof of identity than it would be if I gave it to Mrs. Verrall. Do you understand?

Miss J.—Yes, quite.

Myers P.—Well my reply to the Greek words is that they reminded me of Homer.

Myers P. emphatically repeated that the words reminded him of Homer's Iliad. A little later Mrs. Verrall appeared and to her also the communicating intelligence

said that the words reminded him of Homer's Iliad as well as Socrates.

All this seemed utter nonsense to Mrs. Sidgwick, Mrs. Verrall, Miss Johnson and Mr. Piddington, who after the sitting discussed the record. No connexion could be traced between Plotinus on the one hand and Socrates or Homer's Iliad on the other. They were profoundly disappointed, almost disgusted, with the answer. The whole affair seemed to be mere random guessing on the part of Mrs. Piper.

Later in the day, a clue to the puzzle suggested itself to Mrs. Verrall's mind. In the second volume of *Human Personality*, there is a reference to the vision of Socrates in which the woman of Pthia addressed him in a line from Homer's Iliad. Mr. Myers there speaks of the "prime need of man to know more fully of the laws of the world unseen." This, he argues, is only possible "by the unfoldment from within, in whatsoever fashion it may be possible, of man's transcendental faculty." "Let him remember the vision which came to Socrates in the prison-house ;—then, and then only, showing in an Archangel's similitude the

providence which till that hour had been but as an invisible voice,—but now the ‘fair and white-robed woman,’ while friends offered escape from death, had already spoken of better hope than this, and had given to Achille’s words a more sacred meaning—“on the third day hence thou comest to Pthia’s fertile shore.” Further and this is a point of special significance, the Greek passage in Plato’s *Crito* in which the vision of Socrates is described and which contains the line in Homer’s *Iliad* in which the woman of Pthia addresses Socrates, is prefixed to the Epilogue of *Human Personality*. In this Epilogue the ecstasy of Plotinus is described in a passage which contains the translation of the Greek words.

The extreme appropriateness of the answer of Myers P. that the Greek words reminded him of Socrates and Homer’s *Iliad* which, at first sight, seemed to the experimenters to be utterly nonsensical led them to think that there might be some significance in the apparently purposeless manner in which the names of St. Paul, Swedenborg and Dante were mentioned at the sitting of April 29. It was discovered that on page

261 of *Human Personality*, Vol. II, close to Myers's description of ecstasy there occurs the following passage; "We need not deny transcendental ecstasy to any of the strong souls who have claimed to feel it, to Elijah or to Isaiah, to Plato or to Plotinus, to St. John or to St. Paul, to Buddha or to Mahomet, to Virgil or Dante, to St. Theresa or to Joan of Arc, to Kant or to Swedenborg, to Wordsworth or to Tennyson." "Any one," observes Mr. Piddington, "who bears in mind this paragraph of *Human Personality*, with its special emphasis on the work of the "Prosaic Swede"—"of all earth's spirits...the least divinised, the least lovable who has opened the surest path for men,"—and also that Myers wrote a poem on St. Paul, will understand why an intelligence endeavouring to recollect knowledge once possessed by Frederic Myers should select from the list in *Human Personality* the names of two of those three great visionaries."

It is impossible not to be struck with the great ingenuity displayed by the communicating intelligence in connecting the Greek words with Plotinus and with *Human Personality*. The connection is

indicated in a very indirect and allusive manner, apparently with the object of avoiding a suspicion of telepathy from the sitters. If Plotinus and *Human Personality* had been directly mentioned at the sitting of April 29, the experimenters would, no doubt, have, at the time, been very much satisfied but they themselves would later on have attributed the correctness of the answer to telepathy from their own minds. Myers P. seems to have been well aware of this.

At the sitting of May 26, Mrs. Sidgwick had intended to again ask for the name of the author of the three Greek words, but she was forestalled by Myers P. who, immediately after greeting her, said,—“Will you say to Mrs. Verrall—Plotinus.” Mrs. Sidgwick was unable to read the last word and it was, therefore, repeated in large letters *PLOTINUS*. “What is that?” inquired Mrs. Sidgwick. “My answer to *Autos, Ouranos, Akumon*,” promptly answered Myers P.

Sir Oliver Lodge, who was present at the sitting of June 2, 1907, spontaneously introduced the subject of the test question and said to Myers P.,—“I understood about

Autos, Ouranos, &c., It is considered the best thing you have done." "Really?" answered Myers P, "I thought of Tennyson directly she gave me her words." This evidently refers to the mention of "larches" and "laburnum" on the day following that on which the question was asked. The test question, it will thus be seen, was answered completely, much more completely than any of the experimenters had expected. The meaning of the words was given and their associations with Tennyson, Plotinus and *Human Personality*, unmistakably stated. And the reason for the choice of these words as the motto of the poem on Tennyson, which none of the experimenters knew, was given. Well may Mr. Piddington say that in the production of these concordant automatisms, 'there is evidence both of intelligent direction and of ingenuity.' "I care not", says he, "to whom that intelligence be attributed; but that intelligence and acute intelligence lie behind the phenomena I stoutly maintain."

VI.

The following is a simple case of triple coincidence,—

On August 6, 1906, Mrs. Holland in India wrote the word “Yellow” at the end of a long script referring to various topics and separated from the rest of the writing by considerable space. There was also a change in the hand-writing. On August 8, Mrs. Verrall in Cambridge wrote, “I have done it tonight. Yellow is the written word.

Yellow
Yellow
Yellow’.

The word “Yellow” is written large each time and is emphasised. It also occurs in Miss Verrall’s script of the same day.

On October 24, 1906, Mrs. Holland, after a rough drawing of a flower, wrote in a somewhat peculiar hand the words, “the blue flower” in a separate line. On the same day Mrs. Verrall wrote,—

“The blue is to be preferred. Blue is her colour.

Love in a mist lay dying
 His heart-blood stained the earth
 With cupid's arrows flying
 Departed joy and mirth.
 Where others see the flower
 Blue, in a tangled grey
 He knows in Love's own bower
 The God they thought to slay.

By the side of these verses is written,—
 This is the story of Love in a Mist and
 Love lies bleeding—the little Love is in the
 heart of the misty blue veiled flower. Let
 him that has eyes see.”

It will be seen that the idea of the blue
 flower is expressed in the script in different
 ways and the expression, “blue is her
 colour” seems to indicate that something
 blue is the subject of cross correspondence.
 The same purpose is further indicated by
 the remark, “Let him that has eyes see.”

Mrs. Holland's script of November 7,
 1906, written in India, contains the follow-
 ing passage :—

“On the ledge of the squarish—no oblong window
 is not a safe place for that solution—of course you
 cannot consider poisons out of place in a laboratory—

but there is not enough locking up—*this* one should be locked up—towards the end of the room—to your left an actinic green bottle.”

Miss Johnson understood this to refer to Sir Oliver Lodge, who is often mentioned in Mrs. Holland’s scripts, and sent it to him for comment. Sir Oliver Lodge wrote in reply,—

The one on November 7, 1906 about the poison bottle. This I find is remarkably correct. My two youngest boys have a laboratory adjacent to the house—not at the College at all—and there they do photography, make explosives and many other things. The other night when we were all together I asked them whether they had a green bottle of poison in that laboratory, and the elder said, yes. It is on the bench, quite accessible, not on the ledge of the oblong window, but near it, and on the left. He says it has been there nearly all the winter, and is Mercuric Chloride which the Doctor gave him for a lotion,—not one of their own chemicals. I have told him that it must be either thrown away or locked up. He agrees that it is too accessible, since the younger sisters sometimes enter the same laboratory.”

On February 11, 1907, Mrs. Verrall wrote,

“There has been nothing for you to-day nor will be yet.”

“We cannot make them understand the importance

of what we do and they must learn for themselves. But it is all well and later the news will come."

"It is all fragmentary and you must piece together—the essential word is often not grasped and the whole success thus spoiled."

Three converging arrows were then drawn with the words, *tria convergentia in unum* (three things converging to one point.)

Mrs. Verrall took the drawing for arrows but did not understand why they had been drawn. Mr. Piddington got the script by post on February 13. On February, 12, one day before he received it, Hodgson P had written,—Arrows
Hodgson.

Mr. Piddington asked Hodgson P to explain this and he said that he had given arrows to Mrs. Verrall. On February 12, Miss Verrall who was away from her home and at a distance from her mother and knew nothing about her script drew an arrow and wrote the words "many together" by the side of it. Mrs. Verrall's script of February 18, produced at 11 A.M., contained several words beginning with AR such as architecture, architectonic, architave. A pointed arch was also drawn. At the Piper sitting held on the same day at 11-30 A.M.,

Rector said to Mr. Piddington,—“Hodgson says, do not forget arrow. Watch for it if it comes out.” The following extract from the record of the sitting with Mrs. Piper held on February 19, describes the incident which followed,—

(Hodgson communicating) Hello Piddington, glad to see you. How are you, first rate I hope?

J. G. P.—Thanks, I am all right. You said you were going to give arrow to Mrs. Verrall.

Hodgson P.—I did certainly say so and I have been there three days trying to impress it upon her.

J. G. P.—Yes.

Hodgson P.—Hard. She did get AR, I think, and stopped there.

J. G. P.—Well, you’ll stick to it, wont you? I think it may come out all right.

Hodgson P.—You bet your life I will. She is the very best subject we have to work with and I believe she can become much more important to us.”

On the following day, Hodgson P again said that Mrs. Verrall had written AR and wrote “pointed was my own word to

suggest arrow." This plainly refers to Mrs. Verralls drawing of a pointed arch on February 18. On February 25, Hodgson P asked Mr. Piddington, "Got arrow yet?"

Mr. Piddington replied, "Well, Hodgson, I don't think the word "arrow" has been written, but it has certainly been drawn." Thereupon Hodgson P said,—“Amen. I spent hours of earthly time trying to make her understand.”

In this experiment, Hodson P says that he has given arrow to Mrs. Verrall. Mrs. Verrall, before this, drew three arrows converging to a point. Miss Verrall also, when at a distance from her mother, drew an arrow and wrote the words "many together." This remark and the expression "*tria convergentia in unum*", in Mrs. Verrall's script, obviously mean that the word "arrow", which is the subject of cross correspondence, is transmitted through three automatists, *viz.*, Mrs. Verrall, Miss Verrall and Mrs. Piper.

On December 31, 1884, Mr. Myers, in acknowledging a copy of Dr. A. W. Verrall's

Studies in the Odes of Horace, wrote to him that the first six lines of Hor. C. I. 28 had "entered as deeply as almost any Horatian passage" into his own history. He, however, did not give any reason why this ode had entered deeply into his inner history. Mrs. Verrall was at that time only slightly acquainted with Mr. Myers and was not at all interested in his inner life. In October 1904, Mrs. Verrall came across this letter while examining a mass of old correspondence and wrote to Mr. Piddington requesting him to put the following question to Myers P,—“which ode of Horace entered deeply into your inner life?” Myers P said that he would think about it and give an answer later on. Mrs. Verrall’s impression was that Hor. C. I. 28 had appealed to Mr. Myers because of the allusion to re-incarnation which it contains. In this ode the idea is expressed that “all men, even philosophers and other great men, and even men who have been re-incarnated must die,” and existence after death is regarded as a joyless and worthless thing. Readers acquainted with the Greek conception of the Hades will understand what

this means. At the sitting with Mrs. Piper on April 17, 1907, Mrs. Sidgwick said to Myers P. "Mrs. Verrall asked you once what ode of Horace entered deeply into your inner life, and you said you would answer the question." Myers P replied,—“Oh yes, Mrs. Sidgwick. I recall the question and I had ode to Nature on my mind but as I thought I loved another ode better, I did not reply until I could say it more clearly. Do you remember immortality...I thought I could answer.” Mrs. Sidgwick did not understand the significance of the answer nor did Mr. Piddington when he saw the record. “I understood Myers P,” says Mr. Piddington, “to mean that there was an ode of Horace known as the “Ode to Nature,” and that he had first thought of this ode, as being the one which had entered deeply into his inner life, but had subsequently remembered another ode which he had loved better, but that so far he had not succeeded in mentioning it through Mrs. Piper. The question ‘Do you remember immortality?’ I dismissed as rubbish. Months later, I noticed that *Ode to Nature* and *Immortality* are the titles of two poems by F. W. H. Myers published

in *Fragments of Prose and Poetry*, a book unknown to Mrs. Piper. Between Hor. C. I. 28—the ode of Horace to which Mrs. Verrall's question referred—and *Immortality*, it seems to me that there may be a considerable resemblance in thought, and there are some resemblances in language. The central thought of Myers's *Immortality*, I take to be this; 'the prospect of annihilation is painful; but the prospect of an aimless, inert and monotonous immortality is as bad or even worse.'" Failing to understand that an answer to the question had already been given in part, Mrs. Sidgwick asked Myers P., at the sitting of April 24, to give an answer at the earliest possible opportunity to Mrs. Verrall's question about the ode of Horace. On April 29, Rector said that an answer to the question would be given at the sitting of May 1. As Mrs. Piper was coming out of the trance, she thrice uttered the words, "passed out of their bodies and gone" a misquotation of "passed through the body and gone" from Browning's *Abt Vogler*, stanza V. At the sitting of May 1, at which Miss Johnson and Mrs. Sidgwick were present, Myers P.,

true to his promise, referred to Mrs. Verrall's question. I quote from the record,—

“ Myers P. Do you remember my reference to the Poem ?

Mrs. S. Yes, very well.

Myers P. Did you wish to ask anything more ? Do you remember when I said I had passed through my body and returned ? (alluding to the quotation from *Abt Vogler*). I tried to give it and clearly, but was not sure that you understood.

Mrs. S. Do you mean you gave the name of the poems ?

Myers P. Oh ! yes. I mean I tried to give another part also, which referred to completed happiness in this life and the possibility of returning to the old world again to prove the truth of survival of bodily death. These words were lingering in my memory and I gave it as peak followed star.

(Rector communicating.) It is not all through yet.

Mrs. S. I see.

Rector. I only get a few of his words at a time, friend.

Mrs. S. I see.

Rector. If they do not make sense I am sorry and you must patch them together as best you can.”

The point of the answer escaped Mrs. Sidgwick who, consequently, continued to say evasively, “I see”. Miss. Johnson, however, saw the reference to *Abt Vogler* and,

prompted by her, Mrs. Sidgwick said in reply to Rector's last words,

"Yes, I think they are quite good sense" "(Myers communicating) Mrs. Sidgwick, dear old friend, do you hear me at all?"

Mrs. S. Yes I hear. I have not quite understood, but I am putting it together and I think I shall understand.

Myers P. I believe you will, when I tell you I have returned to breathe in the old world which is not, however, better than our new. Mrs. Sidgwick, my most earnest wish is to complete my undertaking while the opportunity presents itself. Hodgson is present and wishes me to express his love and best wishes. He is helping me now."

Towards the end of the sitting *Odyssey* was mentioned along with the statement, "I went over these odes very carefully and remembered very carefully one in particular which I loved very much."* The clue to the significance of the quotation from Browning's *Abt Vogler*, Mr. Piddington thinks, is to be found in the words, "I believe you will [understand the meaning of the passage] when I tell you I have returned to breathe in the old world, which is not, however, better than our new." The

* The reader is requested to note this in view of later developments.

reader will remember that almost immediately after Mrs. Verrall's question was asked, Myers P. referred to Frederic Myers's poem on *Immortality*. Later on he quoted a line from Browning's *Abt Vogler* and connected it with the question about the Ode of Horace, concluding with the remark that he did not think that the old world was better than the new world in which he now lives. The passage in Browning's poem from which the quotation is made is as follows:—

"The wonderful Dead who have passed through
the body and gone,

But were back once more to breathe in an old world
worth their new."

"What Myers P meant," remarks Mr. Piddington, "I take to have been this: In the Archytas ode (Hor. C. I. 28) existence after the death of the body is regarded as a worthless thing; in *Immortality*, a fear is expressed lest it prove to be but a state of endless monotony; even in *Abt Vogler*, a poem full of hope and joy, the discarnate dead who return to earth find the old world, at least for a moment, worth their new, but I—who know the reality, and who,

like the wonderful dead, have been able to return to breathe again in the old world—I tell you that the view expressed in the “Archytas” ode and the gloomy anticipations expressed in *Immortality* are wrong and under no circumstances is the old world worth the new.”

It will thus be seen that the reply of Myers P to Mrs. Verrall’s question was very different from what she wrongly expected it would be. Her erroneous impression was due to her having read Mr. Myers’s letter to Dr. Verrall rather cursorily. In that letter Myers says that the *first six lines* of the ode specially appealed to him and not reincarnation. These lines contain the idea on which he dwells in his own poem, *Ode to Immortality*. And now from the other world he intimates to us that though he has returned to breathe in the old world, it is not better than the new world in which he now lives, thereby implying that the Horatian conception on which he had meditated deeply when alive on earth and the fears expressed in *Immortality* are groundless. It will be observed that in this experiment also Myers P sticks to his method of answer-

ing test questions indirectly and allusively. The experimenters failed at first to realise the significance of his answers and only gradually succeeded in grasping it. The object, apparently, is to make the phenomena very difficult to explain by telepathy.

The answer of Myers P to Mrs. Verrall's question about the Ode of Horace was repeated about a year later under totally different conditions in America to a person wholly ignorant of what had happened at the sittings in England.* Mrs. Piper returned to America at the end of 1907. In the spring of 1908, Mr. G. B. Dorr, a Vice-President of the Society for Psychical Research, held a series of sittings with her in Boston with the object of getting cross correspondences, without letting the other mediums know anything about it. He himself took particular care to avoid all knowledge of what might be happening elsewhere. Another object which Mr. Dorr had in view was to revive the literary memories of the communicating

* *S. P. R. Proceeding*, Part LVII, Vol XXII, containing an account of the English experiments, appeared in October 1908.

intelligences so that further light might be thrown on the problem of their identity. The following case will explain the nature of these experiments :

On April 22, 1908, Mr. Dorr read ten lines from Shelley's translation of the *Cyclops* of Euripides from A. W. Pollard's *Odes from the Greek dramatists*. This book, of course, was quite unknown to Mrs. Piper and very great care was taken not to allow her to see it, even in the state of trance :

G. B. D. (reads.)

One with eyes the fairest
Cometh from his dwelling,
Some one loves thee, rarest,
Bright beyond my telling.
In thy grace thou shinest
Like some nymph divinest,
In her caverns dewy —
All delights pursue thee,
Soon pied flowers, sweet breathing,
Shall thy head be wreathing.

Myers P. You read well.

G. B. D. Now see if you can tell me whose verses these are that I have just read you. It's a translation from the Greek. I will read them over to you once again. (Reads again).

Myers P. Did he write Ode to Skylark ?

G. B. D. Yes, that is splendid, quite wonderful I think.

Myers P. Thank you. If I am not Myers, who am I ?

On March 10, 1908, Mr. Dorr, who, as I have already said, had no knowledge of the Horace Ode experiment in England, read to Myers P the following extract from Frederic Myers's *Fragments of Prose and Poetry*,—

"From ten to sixteen I [*i. e.* Myers] lived much in the inward recital of Homer, Aeschylus, Lucretius, Horace and Ovid."

As Horace was mentioned, Mrs. Piper's hand wrote, "Ode to Immortality. Ode Horace to Immortality." This, of course, conveyed no meaning to Mr. Dorr. Myers P evidently remembered the question asked in England a year before this and his answer to it. Mr. Dorr then read some more passages from the *Fragments*, the last read being as follows,—

"It was the life of about the sixth century before Christ, on the Isses of Aegean, which drew me most."

Upon these words being read Myers P wrote,—

"A life *incomplete*. Oh ; it is all *so clear*. I recall

so well my feelings, my emotions, my joys, my pain and *much* pain. Oh! I am transported back to Greece. I recall it all. I am transported—I remember before my marriage all my imaginations, my pains, my longing, my unrest. I lived it *all* out as few men did. I drank, as Omar Kyam [sic] life and all its joys and griefs. And *never was it complete*. A disappointing—long, dreary longing for a fulfilment of my dreamed of joys. I *found* it *here* and only *here*. 'Men may come and men may go but I go on for ever.' I shall be delighted to complete my memories of Homer, Horace and Virgil until you are satisfied that I am still one among you, not a fantasy but a reality."

Let the reader compare the statements made at this sitting with those made in England in connection with the Horace Ode question. "This emotional outburst," says Mr. Piddington, "it should be observed is closely associated with "memories of Homer, Horace and Virgil" and not with the other classical authors, Ovid, Lucretius and Aeschylus, mentioned in the passage read from *Fragments* and into it is introduced a quotation from Tennyson whereby the trance-personality proclaims his own immortality."

On March 17, 1908, Mr. Dorr read to Myers P the following lines from Tennyson's

Vastness quoted in Frederic Myers's essay on
"Tennyson as a prophet,"—

Many a hearth upon our dark globe sighs
after many a vanished face,
Many a planet by many a sun may roll
with the dust of a vanished race.
Raving politics, never at rest,—as this poor
earth's pale history runs,—
What is it all but a trouble of ants in the
gleam of a million of suns.

Myers P. recognised this as a quotation from Tennyson and wrote "Achilles" "What about Achilles?" asked Mr. Dorr. "Why, I recalled it when you were questioning me, could you read more!" answered Myers P. "Although," observes Mr. Piddington, "Mr. Dorr entirely failed to see any relevance either in the allusion to Achilles, or in the request for more to be read, I think it was extremely significant that an intelligence representing itself as that of Frederic Myers should connect Tennyson's *Vastness* with Achilles. In *Odyssey* XI. when Odysseus enters the underworld, he meets Achilles, who asks "how durst thou come down to the house of Hades, where dwell the senseless dead, the phantoms of men outworn?" Odysseus

answers him in consolatory words, which draw from Achilles this response: "Nay, speak not comfortably to me of death..... Rather would I live on ground as the hireling of another than bear sway among all the dead that are no more! This passage—one of the most famous in ancient literature—would almost inevitably be recalled to a classical reader by the whole thought, and especially by one of the concluding stanzas of Tennyson's *Vastness*.

What is it all, if we all of us end but in being our
own corpse-coffins at last,
Swallowed in Vastness, lost in silence, drowned in the
depths of a meaningless past?

These lines, though not read by Mr. Dorr, actually form part of what is quoted from *Vastness* in "Tennyson as a prophet"; and the fact that they are there quoted suggests that when Myers P. asked Mr. Dorr to "read more" he may have meant that if he read the remainder of the quotation the clue to the connection of thought with Achilles would be revealed. The reader will now understand the significance of the mention of Odysseus at the English sitting. The intention of the communicating intelligence

apparently was to draw attention to the similarity of the thought in Hor. C. I. 28 with that in Odyssey XI.

On two occasions, as Mrs. Piper was coming out of the trance, she uttered the words "Orion, son of Neptune." At a later sitting Mr. Dorr asked Myers P what he meant by this. "Do you recall an ode of Horace's?" answered Myers P. Mr. Dorr said, "I do not know my Horace well, and I recall none in special at the moment. Why do you ask me?" "Because you ought to know that I am Myers by my giving all such proofs," replied Myers P. Mr. Dorr, not knowing much of Horace and ignorant of the experiment in England, naturally failed to discover any sense in all this. The fact is that Hor. C. I. 28, the Ode to which the question asked in England related, is the only Ode of Horace in which both Neptune and Orion are mentioned.

Let the reader note carefully the details of the following story in Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, Book XI,—

"Ceyx, in order to consult the oracle about the fate

of his brother Daedalion who had been changed into a hawk, starts on a voyage to Claros; but is shipwrecked on the way and drowned.

Meanwhile, Alcyone who sorely against her will has been left behind at home, in ignorance of her husband's death, importunes the gods and especially Juno for his safety. But to make supplication on behalf of one who is dead is an unholy act, and so unacceptable to Juno, who in order that her temple may no longer be polluted by the prayers of Alcyone, bids Iris, the messenger of the gods, seek speedily the drowsy court of Somnus (*i.e.* sleep) and order him to send to Alcyone a vision, in the form of the dead Ceyx, to reveal the sad truth. Thereupon Iris clothes herself in raiment of a thousand hues and, imprinting her bended bow upon the sky, seeks, as bid, King sleeps' abode that lies hidden beneath a cloud. Near by the Cimmerians' land is a cave with deep recess, a hollow mount, the home and sanctuary of slothful sleep, where neither at dawn nor noon, nor eve can Phoebus enter in. From out the ground reek mists and murky fogs, glimmering in a doubtful dusky light. Beasts there are none, nor flocks, nor branches waving in the breeze; and never outcry of human voice awakes the echoes. It is the home of silent rest, yet the silence is not absolute, for from the foot of the rock issues the stream of the water of Lethe, and as the wave glides purling through the stream among the babbling pebbles, it invites sleep. Before the cavern's entrance abundant poppies bloom and herbs innumerable, from the juice whereof Night brews sleep...No watchman on the threshold stands, but in

the centre is a couch whereon lies the god himself (*i.e.* Somnus) with limbs in languor loosed. Iris enters the cave, irradiating it with the colours of her apparel, delivers her message to Somnus, and quickly departing returns to the heavens along the rainbow-path by which she came. From among his thousand sons, Somnus chooses Morpheus, whose special gift it is to mimic the form, visage, gait and speech of man, to execute the task that Iris has enjoined. Morpheus flies to Trachin, and appears in the form of Ceyx to Alcyone, who thus learns her husbands' fate. Overcome by despair Alcyone goes down to the sea to drown herself and as she stands upon the shore the body of a drowned man is washed up close to her. She recognises it as her husband's corpse, and flings herself into the water. In the act of falling she is transformed into a halcyon. The gods take pity on her sorrow, and after a time transform Ceyx into a kingfisher, and thus Alcyone rejoins her beloved mate. For seven tranquil days in winter time, Alcyone sits brooding on her nest as it floats on the face of the waters. Then lulled is the wave of the sea, and Aeolus guards and confines the winds, and secures a calm surface for his daughter's brood."

When at the sitting of March 23, 1908, Mr. Dorr asked Myers P, "What does the word "Lethe" suggest to you," he had not the above story in his mind. Mr. Dorr had no knowledge of Ovid whatever, nor Mrs. Piper. What Mr. Dorr expected to get in

answer to his question were the ordinary associations of Lethe, *viz.* that, in Greek mythology, it is a river in the nether world, the water of which, if drunk, produces forgetfulness and so forth. In the Sixth Book of Virgil's *Aeneid*, it is described how Aeneas in his journey to the nether world, under the guidance of Sybil of Cumae, saw the river Lethe flowing by the Elysian fields and the souls going to return to earth drinking of its water.

In reply to his question, Mr. Dorr got such words as these. "Olympus. Winds were all—* Do you remember Cave ; Lethe. Hades. Beautiful river underground." Mr. Dorr complained that he understood nothing and said that probably there was confusion because of the question being put at the end of the sitting. "Yes", replied Myers P, "Remember, friend, this is exhausting work—exhausting work." During the waking stage, Mrs. Piper uttered these words : "Sybil—Olympus—water—Lethe—sad—lovely—mate. Put them all together.

*Undeciphered words.

entwined love—Beautiful shores—ask him if he cannot hear me.

I shot an arrow through the air
And it fell I know not where.

Lady.—I want to say that the walls came out and in the air was a lady who had no *clothes on*; and in her hand she had a hoop and two pointed things, and she pulled a string, and she pointed it straight at me, and I thought it would hit me in the eye." The word "Sybil" alludes to the description of Lethe in the Sixth Book of the *Aeneid*. "Do you remember Cave?" is an obvious reference to the Cave of King Sleep, "where neither at dawn nor noon, nor eve can Phoebus enter in." In "winds were all—" Aeolus is referred to. "Sad—lovely—mate" is descriptive of Ceyx and Alcyone while the words, "I shot an arrow through the air, and it fell I know not where and in the air was a lady," &c., contain an allusion to Iris, the messenger of the gods, sent to the abode of Somnus. The word "Olympus" occurs in *Metamorphoses* XI, 571, and is evidently used to indicate this fact. Being totally ignorant of Ovid's story, Mr. Dorr had no clue to the interpreta-

tion of the trance-utterances of Mrs. Piper and regarded them as absolutely meaningless. He attributed them to the exhaustion of the medium and apologised to the communicating intelligence for having put the question at the end of the sitting. Thereupon Hodgson said,—“Myers feels a little distressed because he thinks you did not quite understand his replies to your last question. He did give you one or two replies which he and I both fear you did not understand.” Hodgson was quite right. Mr. Dorr’s failure to understand the significance of Mrs. Piper’s words was due to his own ignorance and not to any fault of the communicating intelligence.

At a later sitting, Hodgson repeated the answer already given. “But he spoke of winds,” said Mr. Dorr. “Yes,” replied Myers P, “clouds—arrow—Iris—cave—Latin for Sleep (*i.e.* Somnus)—Morpheus, sticks in my mind, can’t you help me?” “But can’t you make it clearer what there was peculiar about the waters of Lethe?” interjected Mr. Dorr in his innocence. “Yes, I suppose, you think I am affected in the same way,” *but* I

*am not**, neatly retorted Myers P. "The way," remarks Mr. Piddington, "in which Myers P here withheld the obvious and commonplace answer until pressed to give it by Mr. Dorr is, I think, deserving of the utmost attention; for the fact that in at least three other instances this same avoidance of the trite and obvious is to be found in the communications of Myers P creates a presumption that Myers P deliberately preferred so to frame his messages that only study and thought would render them intelligible." At later sittings the following words and expressions were given. "Hoping you would understand. Clouds. IRIS (a bow is here drawn for rainbow and also wavy lines. Mr. Dorr asks what the lines mean) clouds. Why did you not understand? It would have meant so much to you. Ceyx. We walk together. Our loves entwined along the shores. In beauty beyond comparison with Lethe. Sorry it is all so fragmentary, but suppose it cannot all get through." ·

It was not Mr. Dorr only who, at first, failed to understand the meaning of Myers

* An allusion to the water of Lethe producing forgetfulness.

P's ~~answer to the Lethe question~~. Classical scholars like Mrs. Verrall and Mr. Gerald Balfour were also ~~unable to discover~~ any sense in the answers. It was only after diligent search that Ovid's story in *Metamorphoses*, Book XI, was discovered which threw light on the apparently meaningless words of Myers P. To Myers P "Lethe" suggested, as it would do to a finished classical scholar like Frederic Myers, the source of the river, because it explains why the water of it produces forgetfulness. "As the wave glides purling through the stream among the babbling pebbles, it invites sleep. Before the cavern's entrance abundant poppies bloom and herbs innumerable, from the juice whereof Night brews sleep." That the answer came from an intelligence actively remembering Ovid is proved by the fact that the allusion to the story of Ceyx and Alcyone was followed by allusions to other stories of Ovid, *viz.*, those connected with the names of Orpheus and Eurydice, Pygmalion and Hyacinthus. Besides, the particular items of the story of Ceyx and Alcyone which were mentioned at the sittings are not to be found anywhere else

than in Ovid. Now, the question which arises is, to whose intelligence is the answer to be attributed? Not to Mr. Dorr's, because he knew nothing of Ovid; nor can we say that there was telepathy from Mrs. Verrall's mind. "My reading" (of Ovid), says Mrs. Verrall, "is Fasti, Books I, II and III. I lectured on in 1881 to a class at Newnham College; so I knew them well then. Not another word have I read except under compulsion. I hate Ovid beyond words, and I have never read a line that I could avoid." "But there might have been telepathy from other classical scholars," the objector may say. Now, it is a well known psychological law that different persons remember the same things known to them all in different ways according to their *special selective interest*. Mr. Piddington, with great ingenuity, shows that the selective interest revealed in the answer of Myers P to the Lethe question was such as would be appropriate to Frederic Myers.

This case made a strong impression even on the mind of Mr. Podmore. He, of course, assiduously points out what, in his eyes, are its weak points, but on the

case, as a whole, he pronounces the following judgment,—“It must, I think, be admitted on all hands that the method of answering the Lethe question was well devised; that this is precisely the kind of evidence demanded for the proof of spirit identity; and that, though no single case can, of course, be conclusive, yet that if evidence of this kind could be multiplied, the presumption in favour of the reality of spirit communication might at length become irresistible.” Those who know anything of the relentless war which Mr. Podmore has all these years been waging against spiritualism will realise what a triumph it was for Myers P to force this prince of sceptics to make even this guarded admission.

The hopelessness of explaining the cross-correspondences by telepathy is patent. The advocates of this theory, however, are bold men who, nothing daunted, argue still and try their best to explain the phenomena by means of it. The cross correspondences, it is suggested, are manufactured by the secondary personalities of the automatists that subliminally enter into a conspiracy

for the purpose and telepathically exchange ideas with each other. The following luminous explanation is given by an advocate of the telepathic theory,—

Mrs. Verrall's subliminal should have the credit for most at any rate, of these highly elaborated and ingenious experiments. * * This subliminal consciousness launches into the void—not necessarily by any special effort, but merely as a result of the process of thought—the ground idea of such a correspondence, to be assimilated by any other automatists (including trance-mediums) who can receive it. This idea—after many abortive one-sided experiments had been patiently pursued by its author—is at last grasped by other automatists. Then comes a time when Mrs. Verrall's subliminal proclaims in a similar manner, and as it has often done before, a subject for an experiment, and the others proceed to execute the congenial task with enthusiasm, for they too are interested in maintaining the illusion of a spirit agency.”*

The wonder is that men who can swallow such a camel strain at the gnat of spirit communication. The minds of men are not constituted on the same pattern and I do not wish to quarrel with those who can believe that telepathy is the explanation of the phenomena of cross correspondence. Speaking for myself, I can honestly affirm

* Why?

that I find the tales of the Arabian Nights—Aladin's lamp, Kamaralzaman and Bedoura, Sindbad's voyages, Roc's egg and all, much easier to believe than this story of the subliminal conspiracy and roguery of good and cultured ladies, often separated from each other by continents and oceans.



VII.

We have surveyed the main types of the evidence bearing on the problem of man's survival of bodily death which the Society for Psychical Research has so far collected. I have set forth the reasons which lead to the conclusion that at present there does not exist any rational explanation of the phenomena except spirit communication. But if I am asked whether spirit communication has been *proved* to be a fact, my reply is that if by proof is meant certainty so absolute that not even a speculative doubt is possible, spirit communication has not only not been proved but will never be proved. What Professor James calls "knock down evidence" does not exist, unless we regard the

Crossing the Bar, the Lethe and one or two other incidents as evidence of this sort. But if we take into consideration the different kinds of carefully sifted evidence, the total impression on the mind of every unbiassed person must, I think, be that the evidence renders the presumption in favour of spirit communication so strong that it amounts to a moral certainty. Discussing the evidence from the legal point of view, the late President of the Society for Psychical Research, Mr. H. Arthur Smith, a lawyer of eminence, makes the following sound observations:—

“Direct ‘knock down’ evidence is wanting and probably will always be wanting. But circumstantial evidence of a kind abounds; and in courts of law experience has shown that in many respects the evidence called circumstantial is more trustworthy, safer to rely on than direct testimony. For instance the question for a Jury to determine is the identity of A, who is alleged to have shot B. A witness, C may come forward and swear that in broad day-light he saw A fire the fatal shot. In a sense this seems the most cogent proof possible; but in fact it is not so. C may have an interest in getting rid of A, and may be willing to perjure himself to accomplish his object. This, of course, is analogous to the hypothesis of deliberate fraud as applied to our experiments. Again,

C may have very defective vision and may be honestly mistaken in swearing to the identification. This would correspond to mal-observation in our experiments. But if on the other hand it is by independent witnesses proved that shortly before the murder, A purchased a revolver, that the bullet found in the body exactly resembled others found in A's possession, that foot-prints of a peculiar character were discovered leading to and from the spot where the shot was fired and were found to correspond to the marks made by boots known to have been worn by A at the time, and so on; though not one of these facts taken alone would be quite convincing, their cumulative force might well be overwhelming and might justify a much more confident verdict of 'guilty' than the mere unsupported testimony of C, however clear. As Professor James has pointed out in his report on the Hodgson control, this is precisely the character of the evidence before us. It is futile to take it item by item and to proclaim that no one incident in it proves anything.* 'The evidence must be taken as a whole.' (*Proceedings*, S. P. R., Vol. XXIV, p. 342.)

Professor William James makes similar remarks. He, as the reader knows, was absolutely convinced that in the trances of Mts. Piper, supernormal knowledge is displayed, but as to the source of such knowledge, he had not the glimmer of an expla-

* This is exactly what Mr. Podmore does in his hostile criticisms.

natory suggestion to make and to the last, so far as I know, he remained undecided as to whether spirit communication is a fact or not, though he confessed that he was very much impressed by the evidence that makes for it. In his report on Mrs. Piper's Hodgson control, he thus analyses his own state of mind.*

"I myself can perfectly well imagine spirit-agency, and I find my mind vacillating about it curiously. When I take the phenomena piecemeal, the notion that Mrs. Piper's subliminal self should keep her sitters apart as expertly as it does, remembering its past dealings with each of them so well, not mixing their communications more and all the while humbugging them so profusely, is quite compatible with what we know of the dream-life of hypnotised subjects. Their consciousness, narrowed to one suggested kind of operation, shows remarkable skill in that operation. If we suppose Mrs. Piper's dream-life once for all to have had the notion suggested to it that it must personate spirits to sitters, the fair degree of virtuosity it shows need not I think, surprise us. But I find that when I ascend from the details to the whole meaning of the phenomenon, and especially when. I

* I am sorry that I have no space to give an account of the remarkable series of Hodgson communications with which Professor James's Report deals. "Hodgson" succeeded in giving striking proofs of his identity. See S. P. R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXIII.

connect the Piper-case with all the other cases I know of automatic writing and mediumship, and with the whole record of spirit-possession in human history, the notion that such an immense current of experience, complex in so many ways, should spell out absolutely nothing but the words 'intentional humbug' appears very unlikely. The notion that so many men and women, in all other respects honest enough, should have this preposterous monkeying self annexed to their personality seems to me so weird that the spirit-theory immediately takes on a more probable appearance. The spirits, if spirits there be, must indeed work under incredible complications and falsifications, but at least if they are present, some honesty is left in a whole department of the universe which otherwise is run by pure deception. The more I realise the quantitative massiveness of the phenomenon and its complexity, the more incredible it seems to me that in a world all of whose vaster features we are in the habit of considering to be *sincere* at least however brutal, this feature should be wholly constituted of insincerity. If I yield to a feeling of the dramatic improbability of this, I find myself interpreting the details of the sittings differently. I am able while still holding to all the lower principles of interpretation, to imagine the process as more complex, and to share the feeling with which Hodgson came at last to regard it after his many years of familiarity, the feeling which Prof. Hyslop shares, and which most of those who have good sittings are promptly inspired with. I can imagine the spirit of R. H. talking to me through inconceivable barriers of obstruction and

forcing recalcitrant or only partly consilient processes in the medium to express his thoughts, however dimly" (*S. P. R. Proceedings*, Vol. xxxiii, Pp. 35-36).

The difficulty that if the mediumistic phenomena are due to the dishonesty of the secondary personality, we have to conclude that "a whole department of the universe is run by pure deception" is not so very great for Prof. James, because, as a philosopher, he favours the pluralistic theory of many finite gods struggling against real evil in the universe in which victory for the gods, however probable, is by no means assured beforehand. To a believer in one supreme moral governor of the universe, however, the difficulty, as I have already argued, is insuperable.

In trying to arrive at a just conclusion on this subject, undue importance should not be attached to the scepticism of scientific men and philosophers. Some of the foremost of them who have taken the trouble to investigate the phenomena have, as we have seen, ended by declaring their faith in spirit communication, but the majority of those who are hostile do not possess a first hand knowledge of the facts. Even

those who are acquainted with the evidence are very often incapacitated from properly weighing it by the inherent bias of their mind. The influences that determine a man's belief are many and various and not always of a rational sort. It is by no means an easy thing to get rid of the idols of the mind and the extent to which they sway scientific and philosophical minds is amazing. Very few are sufficiently clear-sighted to detect their own bias. But there *are* some whose keen intellect enables them to see that their conviction is determined more by prejudice than by reason and candidly acknowledge it. Mr. Andrew Lang, for example, who, I observe, has this year been elected President of the Society for Psychical Research, declares that nothing would induce him "to intrude on the denizens of the next world through the agency of Mrs. Piper or of any other medium." This, he admits, is his "bias." No wonder that being in this state of mind, he is unable to accept the theory of spirit return, though he confesses that he is puzzled by some of Mrs. Piper's performances, "for example, the replies of her

‘Hodgson’ to Professor William James, the answers of her ‘Mr. Myers’ to questions on Roman mythology and so forth.” A good many of the philosophers and men of science seem to be unable even to give a patient hearing to the evidence for spirit return, because it is not in accord with their theories which they hug so tenderly. Is it not a sound principle that if theories do not tally with facts, it is the facts that must go and not the theories? An investigator of nature has made up his mind that in the universe there is nothing but matter and blind force and that what is called mind is but a temporary phenomenon arising from certain complicated processes of the brain. How can he listen to any talk about spirits? A philosopher of the Absolute has proved to his own satisfaction that, in the Absolute, all individuals are absorbed and transmuted. Even the temporary existence of finite individuals is perhaps to him a scandal. How can he consent to the perpetuation of the scandal by giving a favourable reception to the evidence for man’s survival of bodily death? A Christian clergyman is quite convinced that dead men

and women are now sleeping in **their** graves and will rise only on the last day of judgment. If they have already risen so prematurely, what is to become of the creed on which his very vocation depends? No, the theory is not false, but what does not agree with it is not fact.

No new truth was ever received with open arms. Our most deep-rooted beliefs of today, which we never dream of questioning, were all, when first broached, received with persistent and violent opposition. Even so late as 1806, Mercier undertook to prove that the earth does *not* move round the sun. He declared that he would never admit that our planet revolves like a fowl upon the spit. Camille Flammarion, the famous astronomer, narrates the following amusing story.—

“I was present one day at a meeting of the Academy of Sciences. It was a day to be remembered, for its proceedings were absurd. Du Moncel introduced Edison's phonograph to the learned assembly. When the presentation had been made, the proper person began quietly to recite the usual formula as he registered it upon his roll. Then a middle-aged academician, whose mind was stored—nay, saturated—with traditions drawn from his culture in classics, rose and,

nobly indignant at the audacity of the inventor, rushed towards the man who represented Edison, and seized him by the collar, crying 'Wretch! we are not to be made dupes of by a ventriloquist!' This member of the Institute was Monsieur Bouilland. The day was the 11th of March, 1878. The most curious thing about it was that six months later, on September 30th, before a similar assembly, the same man considered himself bound in honour to declare that after a close examination he could find nothing in the invention but ventriloquism, and 'that it was impossible to admit that mere vile metal could perform the work of human phonation.' The phonograph, according to his idea of it, was nothing but an *acoustic illusion*." (*The Unknown*, pp. 3-4.)

The great Chemist Lavoisier wrote a learned treatise and presented it to the French Academy of Sciences proving that meteors *could not* fall from the skies. When Hypnotism was first discovered it was disbelieved and ridiculed. Today it is an accepted fact. "When rail roads were first constructed," says Flammarion, "engineers predicted that they could never become practicable; and that the wheels of the locomotives would simply whirl round and round without moving forward. * * In Bavaria the Royal College of Doctors, having been consulted, declared

that railroads, if they were constructed, would cause the greatest deterioration in the health of the public, because such rapid movement would cause brain trouble among travellers, and vertigo among those who looked at moving trains." The great geologist Elie de BeauMont always maintained that there never was nor could be any fossil man. We all know the kind of reception that was accorded to Darwin's theory, when first announced. At the present day men vie with each other in declaring their adhesion to it and applying it to Sociology, Politics, Economics, Morals and what not. That a doctrine so novel and so startling as spirit return should, at first, meet with strong opposition is, therefore, only what is to be expected.

In a way, it is, perhaps, not bad that men are not in a hurry to entertain the hypothesis of spirit communication. If there is a field of inquiry in which extreme caution is needed, it is this region of supernormal phenomena so full of pitfalls and abounding in will-o-the wisps. The history of modern spiritualism ought to be a warning to every cautious inquirer. The fraud,

illusion and humbuggery which have so often disgraced that movement should make us wary of easily accepting alleged supernatural phenomena as genuine. It is impossible not to feel some sympathy with Mr. Podmore when he says "that Mrs. Piper would be a much more convincing apparition if she could have come to us out of the blue, instead of trailing behind her a nebulous ancestry of magnetic somnambules, witch-ridden children and ecstatic nuns." Indeed the safest thing for all would be, I think, not to give credence to any alleged phenomenon which has not been passed as genuine by the Society for Psychical Research or which is not vouched for by trained observers like Crookes and Lodge, for example. I do not mean to say that alleged phenomena not so certified must be false, but so great is the danger of being deceived in this twilight region that in order to save the world from degrading superstitions, we must pass on them the verdict of "not proven" even when strong *prima facie* reasons exist for believing in their genuineness. We must constantly be on our guard and try to steer clear of the

Scylla and Charybdis of silly credulity and irrational incredulity. As for the explanation of the facts, any hypothesis put forward for the purpose must be capable of accounting for all of them. The very appearance of the facts is one of the facts. Opponents of the spiritistic hypothesis must explain why everywhere in the world, whenever a man becomes a medium, the secondary personality should so anxiously and persistently try to produce in men's mind the conviction of immortality. Why the secondary personality, so cunning and so resourceful, should yet be wanting in enough wit to diversify a little its monotonous performances? Is that personality as great a believer in God, Freedom and Immortality as it is wicked? On the evidence before us the only rational conclusion is to say with Sir^{*} Oliver Lodge that "the hypothesis of surviving intelligence and personality,—not only surviving but anxious and able with difficulty to communicate, is the simplest and most straightforward and the only one that fits all the facts." (S. P. R. *Proceedings*, Vol. XXIII, p. 284.) It must, however, be remembered that in a matter like this no

finality of conclusion is, as yet, possible. It is quite conceivable, though not very probable, that future investigations may bring facts to light which would render the hypothesis of spirit communication difficult to sustain. But at the present moment, it unquestionably holds the field. Of one thing only I am absolutely certain. Whatever may be the explanation of these phenomena, telepathy is *not* the explanation. The strongest strategic position which the opponents of the spiritistic hypothesis can occupy is to refuse to give any explanation at all. "We do not as yet know," let them say, "what the explanation of these facts is. The terminus of human knowledge has not yet been reached. We know what our ancestors did not know and what is impenetrable darkness to us may be to future generations as clear as noon day-light."

If, then, we provisionally accept the theory of spirit communication as, on the whole, a satisfactory explanation of the phenomena under consideration, how must we conceive of the relation between the spirit world and our world? Of course, no exact answer

to such a question can be given and all that we can do is to frame a hypothesis not inconsistent with accepted principles of science and philosophy. One thing only is to be clear. Whatever may be the mode of life of spirits in the other world, it is inconceivable that they should be disembodied. The body is the necessary correlate of finite personality and if such a personality survives death, it must continue to animate a body. There is no insuperable difficulty in the way of such a conception. The visible body may be only the outer shell of an invisible body composed of ether or something else and death may only be the separation of the invisible body from the coarse material body. And after death the spirit of man, animating an astral body, may continue to live in etherial worlds, unseen no-doubt but more real, because higher, than the material world to which we at present belong. A conception like this is not in the least inconsistent with science. The reader will find it fully elaborated in that remarkable book, the *Unseen Universe*, by such eminent men of science as Tait and Balfour Stewart. The unseen universe may

envelope and sustain the material world and be to it what breath is to life. All this is speculation, of course, but not unreasonable speculation and is warranted by many considerations both of science and philosophy.*

That the unseen world, if it is a reality at all, is spiritual, will not, I suppose, be disputed by any, but what is important to remember is that it is not more essentially spiritual than the sensible world in which we live at present. Matter and spirit are not two distinct entities fundamentally opposed to each other. Spirit is the ideality of matter and matter is the objective expression of spirit.† The universe, therefore, both seen and unseen, is the revelation

* "From amongst the innumerable octaves of light, there is only one octave with power to excite the human eye. In reality, we stand in the midst of a luminous ocean, almost blind. The little that we can see is as nothing compared to the vastness of that which we cannot."—Dr. J. C. Bose in his presidential address before the Mymensingh Literary Conference. (*Statesman*, April 18, 1911).

† For a brief statement of the Idealistic doctrine, see my *Two Essays on General Philosophy and Ethics*.

of spirit apart from which it has no being. *This* world, in short, is as spiritual as the other world and the other world is, like this, an *experienced* world. And in the last analysis matter does not contain anything which is irreducible to experience. The sharp dualism of matter and mind is, principally, the product of mediæval thought and is based on an inadequate comprehension of the fundamental conditions of Thought and Reality. The Greeks, generally speaking, did not draw any hard and fast distinction between spirit and matter. They were a highly artistic people who instinctively saw in matter the revelation of spirit and in spirit the fulfilment of matter. In the Philosophies of Plato and Aristotle, the line between spirit and matter is pretty sharply drawn, but is by no means an impassable chasm. In the Stoic Philosophy, we find a reversion to the earlier modes of Greek thought and a tendency to confuse the two with each other. The supreme spirit pervading the universe, the Stoics call the *Pneumia*, which, according to them, is also the subtlest form of matter. On the whole, the sharp opposi-

tion between matter and mind with which we are so familiar was foreign to the Greek consciousness. It was in the middle ages that an impassable barrier was set up between the two. On this side of the great gulf according to the mediæval conception, is the material world of trials and tribulations and on the other side, in all its glory, is the spiritual world over which God directly reigns, surrounded by angels and archangels. Between the two worlds there is very little connection and it is by means of miracles that God and his angels act on the material world. This dualistic conception was decisively rejected during the period of the renaissance when the prevailing tendency was to return to Greek modes of thought. Men once more learned to see in the physical world the manifestation of spirit. Nature was idealised and conceived of as a living being rather than as a dead machine. To return to the Greek conception was not, however, a mere revival but a further development of it. We may broadly state the whole movement of thought in this way. The early Greek philosophers, while clearly perceiving the

essential unity of matter and spirit, failed to adequately realise their equally essential difference, with the result that in the later stages of Greek thought, when the difference was more distinctly perceived too much stress was laid on it. Mediæval philosophy, inheriting this tendency, further accentuated the difference and altogether lost sight of the unity. Modern Philosophy, so far as the most important development of it is concerned, perceives that the very opposition of mind and spirit implies a higher unity which overcomes that opposition without obliterating it. This mode of thought is systematically worked out in the philosophies of the great Post-Kantian idealists and culminates in the philosophy of Hegel. Hegel's philosophy represents an extreme reaction against the Mediæval dualism of matter and spirit. In so far as that philosophy takes its stand on the essential unity and spirituality of the world, it is unassailable, but its weak point, I think, is to equate the world with the *sensible* world and to conceive of the Absolute as exhaustively revealed in it. There is an element of truth

in the mediæval conception which we cannot afford to ignore. The other world, indeed, is not more intimately related to spirit than this world, but it may be the *larger* world which supplements and contains this world and also the *higher* world in the sense that the ideals and aspirations of men may there be deepened and enriched and better fulfilled. Both the worlds, however, must be *objective* worlds, organically related to each other and be the revelation of a single ultimate spirit.

If spirits, under favourable conditions which but rarely occur, manage to communicate with us, what is their teaching regarding their mode of life in the unseen world? An answer to such a question cannot, of course, be expected from a scientific body like the Society for Psychical Research whose only business is to collect evidential facts. As I have already argued, a detailed knowledge of the future life is impossible for us. From the communications of spirits we can acquire a knowledge

of only such features of their life as bear an analogy with our own.

"The first thing we learn," says Sir Oliver Lodge, "perhaps the only thing we clearly learn in the first instance is *continuity*. There is no such sudden break in the conditions of existence as may have been anticipated, and no break at all in the continuous and conscious identity of genuine character and personality. Essential belongings, such as memory, culture, education, habits, character, and affection,—all these, and to a certain extent tastes and interests,—for better for worse, are retained. Terrestrial accretions, such as worldly possessions, bodily pain and disabilities, these for the most part naturally drop away.

"Meanwhile it would appear that knowledge is not suddenly advanced—it would be unnatural if it were,—we are not suddenly flooded with new information, nor do we at all change our identity, but powers and faculties are enlarged, and the scope of our outlook on the universe may be widened and deepened, if effort here has rendered the acquisition of such extra insight legitimate and possible.

● On the other hand there are doubtless some whom the removal of temporary accretion and accidents of existence will leave in a feeble and impoverished condition; for the things are gone in which they trusted, and they are left poor indeed." (*The Survival of Man*, p. 339).

According to Dr. A. R. Wallace, the teaching of spirits is that—

"Progressive evolution of the intellectual and moral

nature is the destiny of individuals, the knowledge—attainments and experience of earth-life forming the basis of spirit life; that we are all of us, in every act and thought, helping to build up a ‘mental fabric’ which will be and will constitute ourselves, more completely after the death of the body than it does now and that our degree of happiness or misery in the future existence will be directly dependent on the mental fabric we construct by our daily thoughts and words and actions here.”

All this will, no doubt, seem to be but the idle dream of visionaries to “practical” men of the world bent upon useful pursuits. Is not the end of life to acquire fame and power and, above all, to make money? What is the cash value of speculations about man’s transcendental faculty and his future life? What is their *utility* in the modern world, where to prosper means to grow rich? It is useless to attempt to answer such questions. The vision of the seer cannot be translated into the language of the market place and he must be content to be treated as the emancipated prisoner returning into the cave, in Plato’s myth, was treated by the men still in chains.

Either we cannot or we hardly dare
Breathe forth that vision into earthly air.

And if ye call us dreamers, dreamers then
 Be we esteemed amid you waking men ;
 Hear us or hear not as ye choose ; but we
 Speak as we can, and are what we must be.*

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 Lines composed by F. W. H. Myers.



ERRATUM.

P. 149, l. 10. *For* Aenides *read* Enneades.

